STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

PERTAINING TO

THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

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PERSONAL SALVATION

STUDIES IN CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE

PERTAINING TO

THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

BY

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TO

Laura McLoud Tillett

IN RECOGNITION OF THE LOVING SERVICE WHICH SHE HAS EVER RENDERED TO HER HUSBAND IN ALL HIS WORK.

PREFATORY NOTE.

THERE are some doctrines of the Christian religion which enter but little into preaching. Their omission does not seriously affect the spiritual life of the Church, because they have no immediate bearing upon Christian experience. There are other doctrines which must be taught and preached everywhere, at all times, and by all preachers of righteousness. If they are not, Christian experience and the spiritual life of the Church soon come to an end. The doctrines set forth in this volume belong to the latter class. They are among the simplest yet most essential doctrines of the Christian system.

In the language of the schools it is common to make a distinction between Biblical and Systematic theology. They are different in their methods of using the Scriptures, but are, or at least ought to be, the same in the conclusions reached as to what the Scriptures teach. Not a few works designated as Biblical theology, however, are open to the charge of being more concerned to show how the Scriptures develop a doctrine than to set forth clearly and definitely what is the doctrine taught. Systematic theology, on the other hand, endeavors so to use the Scriptures and all other sources of knowledge as to reach definite statements as to what is truth. We have tried in this volume, as far as possible, to combine the best elements of each method—to be as faithful to Scripture as if our method had been entirely that of Biblical theology, and yet at the same time to reach something of that definiteness of statement as to what is the truth to be believed and taught which characterizes Systematic theology in its expositions of Christian doctrine.

Some of our Christian hymns are possessed of great didactic as well as devotional value. They are at once happy statements of doctrine and prayers for an experience of the truth that is taught. The hymns of Charles Wesley are especially rich in these qualities. The hymn with which each one of these doctrinal studies closes has been selected with great care and with special reference to the doctrine set forth in the pages immediately preceding. The devout reader will welcome these prayer-hymns as an aid to the spirit of devotion.

Several of these studies in Christian doctrine have appeared before, in simpler and briefer form, in periodicals, pamphlets, and other publications. But a larger portion of the subject-matter of the volume is now published for the first time. It is composed of lectures which have been delivered to the students of the Biblical Department of Vanderbilt University, where the author has been a teacher of theology for the past twenty years.

Whatever of truth is contained in this volume belongs to God. Whatever of error is found in it belongs to the author. May the God of all truth give clearness of vision to those who read, that they may be wise to discern both the error and the truth—the error that it may be rejected and forgotten, the truth that it may abide with them forever!

WILBUR F. TILLETT.

VANDERBILT UNIVERSITY,
April 3, 1902.

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Christ is the inspiration of the Christian religion and the main source of Christian theology. The Bible itself is an expression of experience. If this experience had not continued, the Bible would have become only the record of an ancient and forgotten life, powerless to preserve Christianity in the world. The theology of any age is largely an expression of the Christian experience of that age. The general experience of any given time, with its characteristic peculiarities, grows up into a style of thinking, a moral and spiritual consciousness, from which there is no escaping. It influences the understanding of the Scriptures. It limits and modifies religious thought. Theology is formed in it as in an atmosphere. The theologies of to-day are part and product of the Christian life of to-day, the true offspring of the present Christian age. This is why they differ from previous theologies. If the theology of a time is various and changing, it is because the life of the time is various, growing, transitional. The vital Christian experience of any time is the best interpreter for that time of God and eternal life. It is the experimental nature of Christianity that makes Christian theology so fresh and living as it is. Progressive experience makes an ever-growing Church, and out of the ever-growing life of the Church comes an ever-growing theology, with the indwelling spirit of God as the guide of its progress. Theology can never stand still while the divine life of the Church is moving forward.

W. N. Clarke.

I.

THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD.

"There is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we by him." (1 Cor. viii. 6.)

"No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." "I and my Father are one." "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth." (John i. 18; iv. 23; x. 30; xiv. 16.)

"But I say unto you, Love, . . . that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven." "Thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly." "Neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." "It is not the will of your Father which is in heaven, that one of these little ones should perish." (Matt. v. 44, 45; vi. 18; xi. 27; xviii. 14.)

"For God is love. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only-begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him." (1 John iv. 8, 9.)

God is love; but love is social—can as little live in solitude as man can breathe in a vacuum. In order to its being, there must be a subject bestowing love and an object rejoicing in the bestowment. Absolute and simple loneliness of being would be a state of complete lovelessness. The Godhead means that as the Fatherhood and Sonship have been eternal, so also has the love. And, as to the creature, God does not love because he created, but he created because he loved. It follows, therefore, that creation in its most real and radical sense is the production of a being capable of being loved, and therefore of loving. Man is God's son not simply because God's creature but because of the God whose creature he is. Fatherhood did not come through creation, but rather creation came because of Fatherhood.—*Principal A. M. Fairbairn.*

I say that acknowledgment of God in Christ,
Accepted by thy reason, solves for thee
All questions in the world and out of it.

Robert Browning.

The whole of Jesus's message may be reduced to these two heads: God as the Father, and the human soul so ennobled that it can and does unite with him. The man who can say "My Father" to the Being who rules heaven and earth is thereby raised above heaven and earth, and himself has a value which is higher than all the fabric of this world. Jesus Christ calls to every poor soul: "You are children of the living God, and not only better than many sparrows, but of more value than the whole world." The value of a truly great man consists in his increasing the value of all mankind. But Jesus Christ was the first to bring the value of every human soul to light, and what he did no one can any more undo.—*Adolf Harnack.*

I.

THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD.

"He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." The fact here stated appears so self-evident that we wonder why the inspired writer should have thought it necessary to state it. Of course a man who comes to God is going to believe "that he is," or he would never come; nor is it at all likely that any man would seek God unless he also believed beforehand that he would reward his search. Why was it thought necessary to state a truth so self-evident? It was to teach us that every one who comes to God should not merely "assume" and "take for granted" the existence of God, but he must have a profound conviction and deep realization of its truth and its moral significance. The first step, therefore, in explaining the divine plan of salvation and in guiding aright seekers after God is to so quicken into life their thoughts concerning the divine Being that they shall not merely assume and assent to, but intensely believe in, the reality of the divine existence and the fidelity of the divine character. How can this best be done? The answer is simple: We must approach God through the revelation made of him by Jesus Christ.

Christ the Perfect Revealer of God.—The first and perhaps greatest service which Christ rendered to the human race by his teachings was to make God lovable. His very first step in saving man was to set forth the character of God in such a manner as to draw men to him and make them feel that he was a God to be loved and not simply to be feared. Men had been told, indeed, that it was their duty to love God; but to love any one simply because it is commanded, simply because it is a *duty*, is not only a very difficult thing to do, but it is at best a very poor kind of love when it is rendered. That divine attribute which most fully defined the character of God to men before Christ came was holiness; but holiness had, as its leading characteristic to the men of that day, aloofness, separateness, not only from sin but from sinners. The Holy God was one to be feared, adored, and worshiped with awe—all this was plain enough and easy enough. But to *love* him—did the law and the prophets teach men how to do this? They did in a sense, and in such a manner that some few learned the lesson. But it was reserved for Christ to teach men this divinest and most beautiful of all lessons about God in such a manner that all could learn it.

The Names of God.—Of the many names for God found in the Bible, two may be said to be his own chosen names, and therefore peculiarly expressive of

the divine character. These are "Jehovah" in the Old Testament (Ex. vi. 3) and "Father" in the New Testament. The word "Jehovah" is derived etymologically from the Hebrew verb "to be" (*hava*, primitive form of *haya*)—though it would be logically more accurate to say that the verb "to be" is derived from "Jehovah"—and is meant to affirm that God is the one and only self-existent Being, and is the cause of all other being—that is, the Creator. Another form of the same word is found in Exodus iii. 14, where the additional idea of personality is asserted when God called himself the "I Am," "I Am That I Am." God alone is pure, essential, personal being; all other being is derived being, and is personal or impersonal according to the will of Him that creates it. The one attribute of Jehovah which overshadowed every other attribute and clothed him, as it were, in a robe of light of such splendor that no man could approach unto him, was holiness. Hence "Jehovah, the Holy One of Israel," was the highest conception of Deity up to the coming of Christ. But not once does Christ call him by this dread name. He substitutes for the dread name of Jehovah, the Holy One, the dear name of Father, the Loving One. At the very beginning of the New Testament, in the Sermon on the Mount, Christ calls God our "Father" no less than sixteen times, and continued to use it throughout his entire ministry, until with his dying breath he prayed:

"Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." In this divine name, then, and the attributes associated with it, we have God's final and perfect revelation of himself to man.

The Personality, Spirituality, and Unity of God.—The true conception of God involves certain fundamental ideas of Deity which, when brought together, serve to define the God of the Bible and to differentiate him from the deity of every other people and religion. These are: (1) *Personality.* This means that God is everywhere throughout the Bible recognized as a self-conscious and rational being, distinct and separate from everything else in the universe. It is opposed to the pantheistic conception of God, which confuses Deity with matter, affirming that everything in its ultimate analysis is God, matter being nothing but the phenomenal and ever-changing "existence form" of God; and hence God is incapable of consciousness except as he comes to consciousness in finite spirits, and ought, therefore, to be referred to as It, not He. But our individuality and personality imply and necessitate personality in God. There could be no such thing as *personal religion* if God were not himself a person. (2) *Spirituality.* "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." Spirit has none of the properties of matter. A spirit has consciousness, intelligence, moral nature, freedom, and similar attri-

butes, none of which are predicable of matter. Man has a physical and a spiritual nature, a visible body and an invisible spirit. The latter is the true self, the true ego, that which makes him capable of worship. There could be no such thing as *spiritual religion* if God were not a Spirit; and whatever in man's consciousness assures him of his own spirituality proves to him at the same time that God is a Spirit. Only a Person could create persons; only a Spirit could create spirits. (3) *Unity.* This means that there is and can be but one God, and is opposed to the polytheism of the heathen religions. To affirm the existence of many gods is to deny the existence of any real and true God. Many gods means no god. When our Lord was asked what was the first and greatest commandment, his answer was: "The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord." This part of our Lord's reply—affirming that the assertion of the unity and personality of the divine Being was the fundamental fact in Israel's faith—is too often overlooked. But it would be just as improper to stop here and not quote the significant words which follow and are a part of the very same sentence: "And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind"—which conjunction of divine unity and human love implies that faith in the unity of God is essential to

any and all real love for God. To believe in many gods is to love no God at all. Polytheists fear their gods, but never love them. Only those who believe in one God are capable of exercising that highest of all creaturely acts of worship—love.

The Triunity of the Godhead.—God's Fatherhood looks in two directions: toward the eternal Son and toward man. The former aspect reveals to us what is called the Triunity of the Godhead. This word, and much that is said in definition of it, is of theological rather than strictly scriptural origin. There are three Persons who are addressed and spoken of in the Bible as God: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. They use the pronouns "I," "Thou," "He," in speaking to and of each other; and yet, while observing this distinction in personality, the unity of God is affirmed in immediate connection therewith. This can only mean that God is one in one sense and three in another sense. To say that God is one in the same sense that he is three would be a contradiction, and could not be believed even if the Bible taught it. But to say that God is one in one sense and three in another sense, while it may transcend reason, does not contradict reason. I may believe *that* a thing is, though I do not understand *how* it is or fully comprehend *what* it is; and this distinction we are compelled to make with regard to many things outside the realm of religious faith. I

believe and know that the sun is the true center and source of life in the solar system, and that light and heat proceed from the sun ceaselessly into all adjacent parts of the universe. I believe that logically (that is, in the order of thought) the sun comes before the light and heat which proceed from it, and yet chronologically (that is, in the order of time) they begin at the same time; so much so that the sun could not exist for a day—yea, not even for a moment—without having light and heat to proceed from it. I can speak of the sun in such a way as to clearly distinguish it from its light and heat, and then again I can so speak of them all as if they were but one. I speak of the light as if it were the sun, and say, "The sun dispels the darkness;" and again I speak of the heat as if it were the sun, and say, "The sun is hot." Without any sense of contradiction whatever, I speak now of all three—sun, light, heat—as if they were a unit, and now again as if they were to be distinguished from each other. Logically the First Person in the Triune essence is the center and source of Deity—the *principatus* of Deity, as one of the early Latin fathers designated him. Logically the Father comes before the Son, and before the Holy Ghost that proceeds from him; but chronologically they may be and must be coeternal. The triunity of Deity has no perfect analogy in material nature; this cannot be expected, seeing that, as we have said

above, spirit and matter have no attributes whatever in common. But nature abounds in analogies that go far enough to show how we can believe *that* a thing is and yet not understand *how* it is; and some analogies show how three things can be one in one sense and three in another sense, unity and triunity involving no contradiction. Man's tripartite spiritual nature, for example, is analyzed into intellect, sensibilities, and will. Here again is unity and triunity without any contradiction. When man thinks or feels or wills, it is not a part of his personality that is thus exercised, but it is the one-whole man thinking or feeling or willing, as the case may be. And so the whole Deity is present in whatever any one Person of the Godhead does. But we need to remind ourselves, in this connection, that it is impossible for the finite mind of man to comprehend the infinite God. If man could do this, it would prove that God is not infinite—which would be equivalent to saying that he is not God. All that we can expect here is that nothing which is revealed concerning the infinite God shall contradict the finite reason of man.

Christ's Method of Revealing God.—How did Christ make God a lovable Being? We answer:

1. By revealing him as *the Father*. This term had been used in a figurative way by the prophets, who spoke of Jehovah as the God of Israel, the Holy One of Israel, Creator, King, Judge, and by other similar

designations; but it was reserved for Christ to make these all to become figurative expressions, and *the Father* to become his real and true name. We shall have occasion in a later chapter to distinguish in what true sense God is the Father of all men and in what more restricted and precious sense he is the Father only of those who are made sons of God by being born of the Spirit. It is his universal Fatherhood that we here and now recognize as the highest and truest conception of Deity ever revealed to man.

2. By showing that *love is the leading attribute in God's nature*, and that this divine love takes in the entire human race: "God so loved *the world*." And its *intension* is as deep as its *extension* is broad: "God *so loved* the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son." There is no expression of self-sacrificing love known to human thought greater than parting with an only son. Love begets love; and nothing but love can beget love. God wins our love by his love for us. We love him because he first loved us.

3. By revealing *himself as the Son of the Father*, and showing that his Father—who was also our Father—was like him. He was the image of the Father, so that to see him was virtually to see the Father; and as the visible Son was the personal embodiment of everything that was lovable and winning, it was impossible not to love the invisible Father, who is in all respects like the Son.

4. By showing us that *God craves our love* first and above everything else. The craving of a soul reveals its true inner nature. God not simply commands us to love him, but he craves our love. This shows that his inmost nature is love. Whatever reveals that God is love makes God a lovable Being.

5. By revealing *the inseparable connection between holiness and love.* The love of an impure and unholy being is not love, but lust. But in teaching that love, in order to be love, must be pure and holy, Christ redeems holiness from the dread realm where it was simply feared and adored, and makes it lovable. To love God and to be loved by him, we must be holy. It is as impossible for us to *love* while we are sinful as it is for us to be loved.

6. By teaching us that *God is good.* The loving Father gives ceaseless proof of his goodness and love by his providential care over all his creatures, doing good in the way of material blessings to the evil as well as the good, and making all things work together for the *spiritual* good of them that love him. Material blessings are objects of divine power, and hence may be sent to those who are God's enemies; but spiritual blessings are conditioned absolutely and necessarily on the free will and piety of the creature. The outgoing goodness of the Father toward man is limited only by the character and capacity of each individual.

7. By teaching *the accessibility of God to every creature.* The privilege of approaching God in prayer belongs to all, and means that every one can ask what he will with the assurance that it will be granted. This promise, however, pertains not primarily to material things (these, as we have seen, are already included in God's providence), but rather to spiritual blessings and to such material and temporal blessings only as have a spiritual end ultimately in view; and none who are abiding impenitently in sin will ever pray in sincerity for spiritual blessings. The model and universal prayer, beginning "Our Father which art in heaven," has seven petitions in it: the first three and the last three are exclusively for spiritual blessings, and the intervening one is thoroughly spiritualized by its environments. But it is plain that no sinner who proposes to continue in sin can possibly pray that prayer in sincerity and truth. Guarding only this one point, the promise is absolutely unqualified: "Ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you."

8. By teaching *the perfect fidelity of God;* by his assurance that God will reward every man faithfully according to his work: "Thy Father which seeth in secret himself shall reward thee openly." Times without number is God spoken of as a rewarder of them that diligently seek him. But it must not be overlooked that this principle of rewarding men ac-

cording to their works is just as frequently spoken of in the Bible in connection with the misery that follows and grows out of a sinful life as the happiness that follows a virtuous life. The reward of wickedness is simply reaping the inevitable fruit of one's own sowing. But even this principle of the divine government of God is as much a proof of the love of God as it is of his justice; for it is designed primarily not to punish sin but so to deter men from sin as to reduce sin and misery to the minimum and thereby to secure the maximum of holiness and happiness among free beings.

9. By teaching that *the Father is seeking the sinner.* God is not only willing to save sinners that come to him, but he wills that all sinners should come to him; and not only that, but he is actually gone forth seeking these sinners: "*He seeketh such* to worship him." What more comforting assurance can those who "diligently seek him" desire than to know that the God whom they are seeking is also seeking them? An impenitent sinner may continue to evade this Divine Seeker; but of one thing we may be certain: that if any sinner is "diligently" and sincerely seeking God, and God is also seeking him, they cannot long fail to find each other, especially as one of these seekers is a Father seeking his own wandering but penitent child, and the Divine Son, the Elder Brother, is also seeking to save the one that is lost.

FATHER OF HEAVEN.

FATHER of heaven, whose love profound
A ransom for our souls hath found,
Before thy throne we sinners bend;
To us thy pardoning love extend.

Almighty Son, incarnate Word,
Our Prophet, Priest, Redeemer, Lord,
Before thy throne we sinners bend;
To us thy saving grace extend.

Eternal Spirit, by whose breath
The soul is raised from sin and death,
Before thy throne we sinners bend;
To us thy quick'ning power extend.

Jehovah! Father, Spirit, Son,
Mysterious Godhead! Three in One!
Before thy throne we sinners bend;
Grace, pardon, life, to us extend.

Edward Cooper.

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*Neither here nor elsewhere in this volume is any significance whatever to be attached to the order in which the names of authors and their works are mentioned.

II.

WHAT IS MAN?

"And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth. So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him." (Gen. i. 26, 27.)

"Men, which are made after the similitude of God." (Jas. iii. 9.)

"What is a man profited, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Matt. xvi. 26.)

Scripture is no story of the material universe. A single chapter is sufficient to tell us that "God made the heavens and the earth." Man is the central figure there; or to speak more truly, the only figure: all which is there besides serves but as a background for him. He is not one part of the furniture of this planet, not the highest merely in the scale of its creatures, but the lord of all; sun, moon, and stars, and all the visible creation, borrowing all their worth and their signification from the relations wherein they stand to him.—*Archbishop Trench.*

Whereas, in other creatures we have but the trace of His footsteps, in man we have the draught of His hand.—*Bishop South.*

The heir of hopes too fair to turn out false,
And man appears at last.

Man—the consummation of this scheme
Of being, the completion of this sphere of life.

In completed man begins anew
A tendency to God.—*Robert Browning.*

Learn more reverence, not for rank or wealth; that needs no learning;
That comes quickly, quick as sin does! Ay, and often leads to sin;
But for Adam's seed, Man! Trust me, 'tis a clay above your scorning,
With God's image stamped upon it, and God's kindling breath within.—*Mrs. Browning.*

When God, in his eternal counsel, conceived the thought of man's creation, says an ancient tradition, he called to him the three ministers who wait constantly upon his throne, Justice, Truth, and Mercy, and thus addressed them. "Shall we make man?" Then said Justice: "O God! make him not; for he will trample upon thy laws." Truth made answer also: "O God! make him not; for he will pollute thy sanctuaries." But Mercy, dropping upon her knees and looking up through her tears, exclaimed: "O God! make him: I will watch over him with my care through all the dark paths through which he may have to tread." Then God made man, and said to him: "O man! thou art the child of Mercy; go and deal with thy brother."

II.

WHAT IS MAN?

"WHAT is man, that thou art mindful of him, or the son of man, that thou visitest him?" is a question, thrice repeated in the Scriptures, which seeks to discover man's true place in the universe and in the purpose of the Creator. The Psalmist, in propounding the question, compares and contrasts man with the material universe. It is man's connection with physical evil and with sin that leads Job to wonder why God should "magnify" him and "set his heart upon him," while the author of Hebrews is evidently thinking of man's relation to Christ and Christ's relation to the entire race when he seeks to know why it is that God is so mindful of him. It is only by approaching the question from all these different standpoints that we can give an answer which will adequately define man's nature and show the purpose of God in creating and redeeming him.

Man's Place in the Economy of Nature.—If we compare man with the material universe and consider only his physical nature, he is but an insignificant atom when weighed in the balances over against "the heavens, the moon, and the stars" which God has created. And yet, in spite of this in-

significance, he has a dignity of nature, a glory and honor with which the whole material universe has nothing to compare. He has been made but a little lower than the angels, and has been given dominion over the works of God's hands, over nature, animate and inanimate. This exaltation of man to the place of prominence and power in nature is not mere poetry; the Psalmist's estimate of him is confirmed by every student of anthropology, whether the subject be approached from theology, science, or philosophy. Natural and revealed theology, different as they are in matter of thought and method of proof, are alike in their recognition of man as the one creature of God whose nature and attributes are such as to place him above all other earthly creatures. Science, whose one main business is to discover, examine, and classify the facts of existence, finds the most significant of all facts to be man. Philosophy and metaphysics, whose mission is not simply to know facts, but to interpret, understand, and explain them, find in man the one being the underlying principles and laws of whose existence place him infinitely above all other forms of creaturely existence with which they have to do. The only rational account we have of man's origin, that in Genesis, makes him to be the last and highest product of creation, and this is equally true whether the narrative be explained literally or as truth taught in allegorical and symbolic

form. If this inspired narrative be interpreted as teaching that man came into physical and spiritual being by a special and instantaneous act of creation, as the great majority of Christian believers have always held, or by a process of divinely guided evolution, ascending gradually from lower forms of life—as many modern scientists and divines teach—the conclusion is in either case the same: man represents the highest point in the ascending scale of earthly existences. Whether, therefore, we approach the question "What is man?" from the standpoint of science and philosophy, which are man's interpretation of nature and its laws, or from the standpoint of Christian theology, which is man's interpretation of the Bible, we reach the same conclusion: that man is a being of such nature and dignity that all things lower, looking upward, and all things higher, looking downward, point to him as the creature of highest significance in the economy of nature.

The Spiritual Nature of Man.—The discovery, however, of this high place which man holds in the natural world fails in itself alone to answer fully the question as to why the infinite and eternal Ruler of the universe is mindful of him and visits him as he is mindful of and visits no other of his creatures. We must, therefore, study more closely man's nature, to see if we can discover therein the explanation of this divine regard for him. Our study is quickly re-

warded. Man has two natures, a material or physical and an immaterial or spiritual nature. Man as a physical being is as genuine a part and product of the natural world as any other form of animate existence about him; but if this earthly physical nature were all that he possessed, there would be no explanation of Jehovah's mindfulness of him and oft-repeated visitations. It is man's immaterial and spiritual nature, therefore, that constitutes his crowning endowment, gives him his supreme significance in the purpose and government of God, and makes him an object of divine solicitude. The physical nature, however, is not wholly without moral significance, seeing that it affects more or less directly the spiritual nature, and has not a little to do with the method and issues of human probation. Man's lower or physical nature has two names in the Scriptures—flesh and body—the former indicating its connection with and relation to the natural and material world to which it belongs, and the latter describing it as it is connected with and related to the free and personal spirit that dwells within it. So, too, man's immaterial nature has two names in Scripture—soul and spirit. As related to the lower nature and viewed from the earthy side, the immaterial nature is called soul; as related to higher intelligences and viewed from the divine side, it is called spirit. A proper understanding of these four terms and their uses in the

New Testament is of greatest importance, if indeed it be not indispensable, to one who would understand clearly the doctrines of personal salvation. But all that we desire to emphasize here and now is the fact that man is possessed not only of a body and an animal soul, but of a spirit, and it is this spiritual nature that gives him his chief significance and his transcendant superiority over all other earthly creatures. Leaving behind, then, the flesh, the body, and the soul as related to the body, we take up, for further analysis and study, the spiritual nature of man.

Mind and Reason in Man.—The spiritual nature of man manifests itself first as mind or reason, and is possessed of mental and rational attributes. It is by virtue of these attributes that man thinks and feels and chooses. The intellect, the sensibilities, and the will are the three terms used in psychology to describe these three functions of the spiritual nature or these three forms of spiritual activity. This analysis of man's mind into parts, however, is logical rather than numerical—that is, man's spirit is not made up of three separate parts, one of which thinks and another feels and another chooses; but the one whole man thinks, and the whole man feels, and the whole man wills. When we say that man is a rational being and exercises reason in whatever he does, we simply call attention to a function of his

mind, or rather to a form of his mental activity, that gives him his chief distinction as compared with all lower animals, which, though surpassing man in natural instinct, are incapable of reason. In reasoning man exercises his intellect and his will, but not so much, if at all, his sensibilities. Indeed, we sometimes contrast reason with feeling, as when we say of any one that he follows his feelings rather than reason —that is, he does not act as if he exercised reason in determining his conduct. To exercise reason is to act with judgment, motive, purpose. Reason is the greatest function of mind. These statements are not made with any special reference to the science of psychology and mental philosophy, and hence no effort is made at technical accuracy in the use of terms employed. It is wholly with reference to the function that mind and reason perform in the realm of religion, and more particularly still in the realm of personal salvation, that we make this analysis of the intellectual side of man's spiritual nature; and for this purpose a simple and popular use of relative terms is more to be desired than the more elaborate and technically accurate distinctions that are necessary in scientific treatises on psychology and mental philosophy. Mind and reason have a place of primary and fundamental importance in religion. "Come and let us reason together, saith the Lord," is the form of the invitation which the Creator gives to

his creature man in calling him from sin to salvation. It is because sin is unreasonable and righteousness reasonable that God has a moral right to forbid the one and to demand the other. That which contradicts reason, we cannot believe, though we can and do believe many things that transcend reason. A knowledge of the three elements of the mind which we call intellect, sensibilities, and will is invaluable to the proper understanding of the doctrines of personal salvation. There is scarcely a doctrine that is not capable of luminous treatment in accord with this threefold analysis of the mind. Take, for instance, the doctrines of repentance and faith, which will be later discussed in detail and at length. They each yield a most helpful analysis from this standpoint. Repentance (as the Greek word *metanoia*, so translated, shows) is first of all a change of mind and thought, which is an act of the intellect; it is, secondly, a change of heart and feeling, and as such we call it contrition or sorrow for sin; it is, thirdly, a decision to forsake sin, which makes it a volitional act of the will. In the same way, faith, as we shall presently see, may be explained as assent, or belief of the mind upon evidence, which is a purely intellectual act; it is also a trust of the heart, which indicates its relation to the sensibilities; and yet again it is consent, which contains a volitional element not present in mere intellectual assent, being the active self-

commitment of the soul to the person or truth believed, and this is an act of the will. All the truths that act upon man's spiritual nature in a saving way may be thus analyzed in accordance with their relations to the intellect, the sensibilities, and the will. They must be presented to, and apprehended by, the intellect, and must find a lodgment in his heart and move his sensibilities and feelings, and then alone is his will prepared to act and make those decisions that determine moral character and ultimately fix destiny. This latter function of the soul, the will, is especially important in theology, and nowhere more than in studying the doctrines of personal salvation, as the doctrine of free moral agency is based on a true conception of the human will. It will, therefore, presently receive our especial attention and most careful study.

The Moral Nature of Man.—But even mind and reason, great as they are, are not man's highest endowment. Man is possessed of a nature and attributes higher than the merely intellectual and rational; he is possessed of a moral nature, and has moral attributes. This is as much higher than mind and reason as mind and reason are higher than brute instinct and animal life. It is not until we recognize this crowning element in the spiritual nature of man that we can understand his real nature, purpose, and destiny in the moral government of God. Indeed, it is

not until we come to consider moral beings that moral government and a Moral Governor have a meaning. While we may conceive of a purely rational being who should be possessed of mind and reason and free will, without having a moral nature and without being under probation and moral obligations, yet, as a matter of fact, there is no such being in the universe, so far as we know. But while there might be a rational being who should be without any moral and religious nature, it would be impossible to have a moral being who should not be also a rational being, possessed of mind and reason. It is because of this fact—viz., that all spiritual beings possessed of mind and reason are also moral beings, and all moral beings are necessarily possessed of mind and reason—that the adjectives moral, spiritual, and rational are practically synonymous and interchangeable. Hence the moral nature and the spiritual nature are used as equivalent terms. But it is, at the same time, not to be lost sight of that it is that part of man's spiritual nature which is distinctively moral that makes him like God and akin to God—divine, immortal. This is what makes him "of more value" in the eyes of God "than many sparrows"—yea, than many worlds of merely material and irrational forms of existence.

Moral Nature Implies Sonship.—Man is not simply the last and highest of God's creatures, but he bears in some deep and exalted sense, as no lower creature

does or can, the image of his Creator. "Let us make man in our image" is the creative word that differentiates the origin of man from all lower beings, and gives him his moral and spiritual nature. This unique distinction makes him something more than a creature; it makes him a son. Of all lower forms of existence God is the Creator, but nothing more; to man he sustains the relation not only of Creator but of Father, with all that that potent and precious word implies. God is a Spirit, and nothing that bears his moral image can be without a moral and spiritual nature. It is because man possesses a moral nature involving sonship, then, that he is the special object of Jehovah's continued regard.

The Incarnation a Proof of Man's Exalted Nature.— The divine regard for man is manifested in no other way so fully and so forcibly as in the incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ. God's other visits to the sons of men from time to time were but prophetic symbols of that greatest of all divine visitations in the person of Him who, though he was from all eternity in the form of God, yet took man's nature upon him in order to visit and mingle with man. The incarnation of Jesus Christ is the crowning glory with which God has honored the nature of man. In the creation, man was made in God's image; in the incarnation, God was made in man's image. This glorious fact could never have been realized if man had not

possessed a moral nature. For while the incarnation did embrace the lower physical nature of man, this union of God and man in the person of Christ would have been impossible had there not been a basis and bond for such union in the moral nature of man.

The Freedom of the Will.—We must now consider man's dignity and superiority of nature as shown in his possession of free will. Freedom consists in the self-determining power of the will. The human will cannot be necessitated to action by any power outside of itself without destroying, so far as that act is concerned, its true freedom. It matters not whether the power that necessitates the will acts upon it from without or from within; the result is the same: it cannot be free. It matters not whether this power be the Divine will or another human will, or a Satanic influence; if it necessitates the will, freedom is destroyed. Some have defined freedom as "doing whatever one wills to do," and have said that, as God can work from within upon the will and make it willing, the person will be acting freely in following his divinely necessitated volitions, because he is "doing what he wills to do." In this way an effort is made to reconcile predestination and free will. But this would be the most absolute kind of slavery, and could only be called the bondage of the will, not properly the freedom of the will. A person under mesmeric or hypnotic influence is "doing what he

wills to do," but his slavery to the more powerful will is well-nigh absolute. We do not say that there can be no such thing as a divinely necessitated volition or a divinely caused decision of the will, but we do say that such divinely produced volitions cannot be free volitions.

Influence of Motives on Free Will.—Man acts in view of motives. Whatever appeals to a free personality, and acts as an influence upon the will, is a motive; but motives do not necessitate the will. There is no causative power in motives. They can act only as influences. To say that a man must follow what to him is the strongest motive, and then define the strongest motive as that which a man follows, is to reason in a circle. It is the man that determines the motive, rather than the motive that determines the man. Of course the influence of any given motive on a man depends on his character, which is at once a result of past freedom and an important factor in determining the exercise of his free agency in all present and future acts. But as long as character is in its formative, free, and probationary state, the influence of motive on free will is not certain and fixed, but contingent; and the same free agent, under identically the same circumstances and the same motives, may choose to do one thing one day and a different thing another day. If it can be shown that existing conditions acted upon the will in a way to necessitate

a given volition, then it is shown that the individual was not free and responsible in that act. Ability always limits obligation, unless inability is self-superinduced. A free agent, who by former sin has made himself unable to resist temptation (a confirmed drunkard, for example), is yet responsible because his inability is self-superinduced.

Free Choice the Essence of Free Will.—We frequently hear it said that "the will puts forth its volitions freely." Does this imply that man can put forth volitions or not as he chooses? We think it more accurate to say that the human will puts forth *a* volition necessitatively in that it cannot do otherwise; but it puts forth *this rather than that* volition freely. The will is bound to act in some way, and to put forth some volitions; but it is not under the necessity of putting forth one particular volition, and no other. Even absolute non-action, doing nothing at all, is, so far as the will is concerned, a volition and an act, and one for which man is just as responsible as he is for a positive volition which results in doing something. There may be sins of non-action as well as sins of action; sins of omission, which are as culpable as sins of commission. The true freedom of the will, then, consists not in its power to put forth a volition or not —for act the will must in some way—but rather in choosing which one out of a number of possible volitions and acts shall be made real. All this consti-

tutes what we may call natural or metaphysical freedom.

Moral Agency.—When man's will is directed toward the decision of questions of right and wrong that have their bearing on moral conduct and character and destiny, it is called moral free agency. When we say, therefore, that man is a moral free agent, we mean that in all matters of right and wrong his will acts freely and is not determined or necessitated to a given action by anything outside of itself; that, while God, Satan, other human beings, external circumstances and motives manifold, may appeal to him as influences, yet none of them can necessitate his will to a given volition. God, in a sense, limited himself when he created a free will. For while God can, as a mere matter of power, cause the created will to put forth any volition that He may choose, yet He can do so only by destroying its freedom in that particular volition. He cannot make a volition to be free and necessitated at one and the same time. If this be true, it is impossible to reconcile with human free agency any such divine predestination in eternity as necessitates all the volitions and acts of men. Divine foreknowledge and human free agency are entirely reconcilable with each other, but unconditional predestination and free agency cannot be reconciled. And yet there may be *some* divinely produced volitions in free beings.

Divinely Produced Volitions in Free Beings Possible. —The divine guidance and special providence of God may involve divinely produced volitions, here and there, even as an earthly parent, while allowing his child generally to act freely, may yet here and there come in with his superior intelligence and will force, and himself determine and causatively secure a given act; but he does not call this latter act *free*, or indeed regard it as his child's act, except in a secondary sense. In like manner, free human volitions and divinely produced volitions may both meet in perfect harmony in the same life. But if there are such divinely produced volitions, they cannot be called free. Nor can a necessitated volition be a moral volition, for the simple reason that it is not free, and hence cannot be virtuous or vicious. Predestinarianism has been so taught that it excludes the possibility of moral free agency, such as human consciousness and the Bible both teach; and the doctrine of free agency, on the other hand, has been so taught that it has seemed to some to exclude the possibility of any such real intervention of the Divine Will in human life as is necessary to explain the doctrine of the divine guidance and special providence of God in, as well as over, his creatures. If God could determine and necessitate all the volitions of his creatures, and they remain free at the same time, then he would most surely secure the holiness and salvation of all men; his very nature is the

guarantee of this. But the fact that some free agents sin is proof that God cannot control their wills without destroying their freedom. It is no limitation in power even to the omnipotent God to say that he cannot do an impossible thing or work a contradiction in thought; and to secure by divine power a given series of volitions and acts which shall at the same time be really free, is a contradiction in thought, and hence an impossibility in execution. In free beings, necessitated holiness and necessitated guilt are alike impossible; or, if there be such things, they could not have a moral character, and be virtuous or vicious. If there were such a thing as necessitated moral holiness and necessitated moral guilt, it would be the virtue or vice not of the creatures possessing these moral qualities, but of the personal being that caused and necessitated these qualities. A free agent whose volitions and acts should be determined and caused by another will would cease to be a free agent; indeed, he would cease to be an agent in any true sense; he would simply be a person acted upon, a human machine. To ascribe holiness (or guilt) to such a one would be a misnomer, a moral fiction; at least it should be called created or necessitated holiness to distinguish it from what we usually mean by that term—viz., the moral virtue that belongs to a free being, and which is the result of probation under conditions where sin is possible

Necessitated holiness, if it be possible, cannot be meritorious and rewardable; and necessitated guilt, if it were possible, could not be demeritorious and justly punishable. If we define holiness as that attribute of a free being under probation which results from right volitions and virtuous acts, and guilt as that attribute which results, under probation, from wrong volitions and sinful acts, we have a definition that is at once clear and self-consistent, and is the only definition that can harmonize with the doctrine of moral free agency. Is necessitated holiness then impossible in the universe of God?

Necessitated and Probationary Holiness Distinguished.—Perhaps we should not affirm that there cannot be such a thing as necessitated holiness; or if we do, at least not with the confidence that we can affirm that there cannot be such a thing as necessitated and punishable guilt; for the eternal justice of the Divine Being renders this latter absolutely impossible. Indeed, we incline to think that there are things which, in spite of the fact that such language is open to serious objection, yet, for want of a more copious moral vocabulary, we shall be under the necessity of calling examples of "necessitated holiness." Adam's character at his creation is sometimes defined as "holy," but it would be more proper to designate his primitive state as one of moral innocence and purity rather than of holiness. He was not so much cre-

ated holy as placed here to develop holiness under probation. But the holiness of God—is it not eternal and therefore "necessitated holiness?" Those infants who die in infancy without having stood any probation are saved in heaven, and they have a moral nature. Shall we not call them "holy?" Perhaps, then, inasmuch as, for want of a different term, we must designate these as cases of necessary holiness, we should add a qualifying adjective to the other kind of holiness, to distinguish the two, and call it *probationary* holiness. This probationary holiness is, we may confidently affirm, the highest kind of *creaturely* holiness; and to make this possible and actual was, we may say, the great purpose of God in creating man and placing him under the law of probation. We need not say, then, that there can be no such thing as "necessitated holiness." Indeed, there may be beings, for aught we know, who have been created by God and placed at once in heaven without ever standing any probation (though all angels, so far as we know, have stood a probation), and we may be under the necessity of calling them, for want of a different and better term, "holy;" but if so, we can at least say that their holiness is of a far inferior type to that of men and angels who have had to undergo a trial and develop holiness as the result of a severe and fearful probation that had in it the awful possibility of guilt and sin.

Sin Possible Wherever Holiness Is Possible.—In order to make probationary holiness possible, it was absolutely necessary to make sin possible. A probation must have two alternatives and two possible issues, or it would be no real probation. But it does not follow from this that sin must be actual; it only follows that it must be possible. The Creator did not make sin a necessity, only a possibility; and he would not, we may confidently say, have made it even a possibility had it been possible for him to secure the highest type of creaturely holiness without thus making it possible. It was man, not God, who made sin actual. He made it actual by the abuse of his freedom, which was given him for the development of holiness and in order that through holiness he might realize the highest possible creaturely happiness. It is easy to see that the holiness of beings who have lived in a world of probation, and have freely served and obeyed God in the face of severe and manifold temptations, is the higher type of holiness, and that it will glorify the Creator infinitely more than any created and necessitated holiness can. Necessitated holiness can glorify God only as a house glorifies its builder or the marble statue its sculptor, not as a son glorifies his father or a pupil his teacher or a citizen his ruler or a soldier his leader.

Man Immortal.—Our definition of man lacks but one

more attribute, and the question with which this chapter opened will be fully answered: man is immortal. If this short life were all, there would be no satisfactory explanation of why God should have so greatly magnified man as to create him in his own image and make him a partaker of the divine nature. That which lives but for a day and then disappears forever, cannot have much intrinsic value. That which lives forever has infinite value. "Eat and drink, for to-morrow we die, and death ends all" is an ideal of existence which has through all the ages paralyzed the aspirations and debased the moral nature of every man who believed it. The deepest instinct of the soul, the profoundest craving of the heart of man, is that for continued existence. Man's immortality is everywhere assumed in the Old Testament, and from the beginning virtuous and holy souls have longed to renew their life after death with Him in whose presence there is fullness of joy, and at whose right hand there are pleasures forever more. But it was not until Christ came and brought life and immortality to light in the gospel that the exceeding richness and fullness of the life to come began to be realized. The natural man, the animal nature, perisheth; the spiritual man is immortal. That which is seen is temporal; that which is not seen is eternal. Moral free agency would have but little range, if man were not immortal; but being immortal, it becomes the pivot upon which his eternal destiny turns.

The Question Answered.—The answer to this question, then, "What is man, that thou art mindful of him?" is found in the fact that man alone, of all earthly creatures, bears the image of his Creator, is possessed of a moral and spiritual nature, is immortal, is a free moral agent, and is standing a probation in this life that is to determine his holiness or guilt, and this, in turn, is to decide his destiny in the world to come. Another fact adds intensity and increased significance to the problem of his existence, and that is, that sin has entered into the world and affected more or less disastrously the nature and environment of every human being. The existence of free agents in a state of moral innocence, standing a probation that is to decide their eternal destiny in another life, is a spectacle for God and angels to witness with divine interest. But if that state of innocence is in any way changed into one of sin, the problem would be intensified, and the spectacle become one of yet deeper interest. Whatever man's primitive state of probation may have been, certain it is that at present it is seriously affected by the presence of sin. The infinite Father could not be a disinterested and distant spectator of the life and probation of such beings—especially as they owe their existence to him, and it is obedience to his will that is made the standard and law of their life. His very nature and attributes, notably his justice and love, make it impossible that he should be unmindful of human beings engaged in

standing a probation of such far-reaching consequences. But God's love and compassion for man have not been manifested simply in a general way. They took definite and specific form in the coming of his own divine and eternal Son, whose incarnation, self-sacrificing life, sufferings, and death were the strongest proof that it was possible even for the infinite God to give of his interest in man and his desire for his salvation. These divine influences have placed man, fallen and sinful though he be, in a state of gracious ability to work out the problem of his existence, attain unto holiness, and thus fulfill the purpose of his Creator.

The foregoing considerations all go to show that it is in the moral free agency of man that we find the key with which to unlock the secrets of his nature and destiny. But moral free agency implies and necessitates the principle of probation in the moral government of God. To that important doctrine we must now direct our attention. As, however, we have found it necessary to assume the law of probation at many points in the foregoing discussion of moral free agency, so it will be necessary to reiterate many of the points already made in the following discussion of probation; for while freedom and probation may be distinguished as ideas, they cannot be separated from each other in their development; each implies and involves the other.

THE SOUL OF MAN.

What is the thing of greatest price,
The whole creation round?
That which was lost in Paradise,
That which in Christ is found:
The soul of man—Jehovah's breath—
That keeps two worlds at strife:
Hell moves beneath to work its death,
Heaven stoops to give it life.

God, to reclaim it, did not spare
His well-belovèd Son;
Jesus, to save it, deigned to bear
The sins of all in one.
The Holy Spirit sealed the plan,
And pledged the blood divine,
To ransom every soul of man—
That price was paid for mine.

And is this treasure borne below,
In earthen vessels frail?
Can none its utmost value know,
Till earth and spirit fail?
Then let us gather round the cross,
That knowledge to obtain;
Not by the soul's eternal loss,
But everlasting gain.

James Montgomery

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III.

PROBATION.

"Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision: for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision." (Joel iii. 14.)

"So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God." (Rom. xiv. 12.)

"Who will render to every man according to his deeds." (Rom. ii. 6.)

"For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad." (2 Cor. v. 10.)

"Whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. For he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." (Gal. vi. 7.)

"In every nation he that feareth Him, and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him." (Act. x. 35.)

"Unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." (Luke xii. 48.)

Life is probation, and the earth no goal
But starting point of man; compel him strive,
Which means, in man, as good as reach the goal.

The soul that's stung to strength through weakness
Strives for good through evil—
Earth its race-ground, heaven its goal.

Robert Browning.

It is not to taste sweet things, but to do noble and true things, and vindicate himself under God's heaven as a God-made man, that the poorest son of Adam dimly longs. Show him the way of doing that, the dullest day-drudge kindles into a hero. They wrong man greatly who say he is to be seduced by ease. Difficulty, abnegation, martyrdom, death are the allurements that act on the heart of man. Kindle the inner genial life of him, you have a flame that burns up all lower considerations. Not happiness, but something higher.

Thomas Carlyle.

The greatest idea that ever entered my mind is the thought of my responsibility to Almighty God.—*Daniel Webster.*

Great God! on what a slender thread
Hang everlasting things!
Th' eternal states of all the dead
Upon life's feeble strings.

Infinite joy, or endless woe,
Attends on every breath;
And yet how unconcerned we go
Upon the brink of death!

Waken, O Lord, our drowsy sense
To walk this dangerous road;
And if our souls be hurried hence,
May they be found with God!

Isaac Watts.

God tests men—the devil tempts them.

III.

PROBATION.

Probation may be defined as "the moral trial of a free spirit, continuing for a season under conditions appointed by God, and issuing in the confirmation of an abiding and unchangeable state." The teachings of Scripture concerning man in his relation to time and eternity may be summed up in the following proposition: This life is a state of probation, of limited duration, in which man, a free moral agent, is, with full knowledge of the fact, undergoing a trial that is to determine his happiness or misery in that future and eternal life that begins at death. That man's free conduct in this life should fix irrevocably his destiny in the world to come is the most momentous fact connected with human existence. It invests this life with an infinite importance.

The Five Stages in Probation.—The trial of a free being in a state of probation, issuing in a fixed and eternal state, involves five steps or stages, that may be indicated by the following words: volitions, acts, habits, character, destiny. Volitions, put forth, result in acts; acts, often repeated, fix habits; habits, long continued in, make character; character, when fixed, determines destiny. Let us consider these

things in themselves and in their relations to each other, perhaps relating some things already said.

Volition.—Volitions are the expression of our freedom. They are the decisions of our wills, acting freely and uncontrolled by anything outside of themselves. Our moral accountability is based upon the fact that we are free moral agents, and our freedom consists not so much in the fact that we do what we will to do as in the power to control our own wills and to determine our own volitions. A sin lies rather in a volition of the will than in the external act resulting from that volition. Our volitions are just what we make them and just as we make them: holy or unholy, virtuous or vicious. Our moral free agency consists in the conscious possession of the power to do right or wrong, just as we choose. Our volitions, the decisions of our wills, are freer than thought; they are freedom itself. Destiny, on the other hand, is a state or condition irrevocably fixed and eternally unalterable. Yet such is the nature of moral probation and free agency that that which is volition in its origin becomes destiny in its end. Let us see how this comes about.

How Free Volitions Result in Destiny.—Volitions make acts. We control our volitions at will; but when volitions have been put into execution and have become acts, they have gone beyond our power of control. We cannot undo an act that is done.

Not even the omnipotent God can undo an act that is done or unsay a word that is said, although he may, by his omnipotence, make the act, so far as its results are concerned, as though it had never been done, and the word as though it had never been said. But while we cannot undo an act that is done, we need not repeat the act unless we choose. If, however, the act be repeated, we find ourselves in the presence of a new law—viz., that each repetition of an act begets a rapidly increasing and powerful tendency toward future repetitions—that is, acts often repeated create habits, something more fixed and powerful than themselves. But still a man may, such is the power of the human will, break his habits, even though they be like chains of iron. But habits, long continued in, fix something stronger and more unalterable than themselves—namely, character; and when character has been so long continued in that it becomes fixed, it passes into destiny, and not even God ever changes destiny; indeed, we may say that, in keeping with the laws of his moral government, God cannot change destiny.

Character Both a Result and a Cause of Volition.—While in the first formation of character free will and volitions are the cause and character is the result, yet, when character is formed, then the reverse is true: character becomes the cause, and volitions the result. The statement here made, that character

"causes" volition, perhaps needs to be modified; for it is strictly true only when character is fully formed and fixed, and has passed what may be called the destiny line in its development. As a moral free agent, man becomes bad, and attains to evil character only because he freely chooses and freely does that which is wrong; but evil character, when once formed, in turn accounts for and tends to produce evil volitions and evil acts. A man becomes bad because of his evil volitions, but a bad man puts forth evil volitions because he is bad; and in proportion as he approaches what we may call fixedness in bad character, in that proportion can we predict with certainty that his volitions and acts will be evil and correspond with his character. So a moral free agent becomes virtuous and holy only because he freely chooses and freely does that which is virtuous and holy; but when a virtuous and holy character has been attained, then such character becomes the ground upon which we can predicate, with reasonable certainty, that future volitions and deeds will be virtuous and holy. We say "with reasonable certainty," not with absolute certainty; for, as a matter of fact, a free agent who has become virtuous and holy may yield to temptation, and through sinful volitions and acts vitiate and destroy the good character already attained, and form instead a sinful and unholy character. A good man may become bad, and a bad man may become good;

character may be changed. There is a difference, however. A man of unholy and sinful character can become virtuous and holy in character only through divine grace, but a man of good character can of himself change that character for the worse by simply yielding to temptation—to sin.

Character Not Created, but Formed under Probation.—We have seen that character, properly speaking, is not something created by God, but something formed by one who is a moral free agent under probation. As applied to man, it presupposes free agency, moral probation, and time for development; it is the result of a process. While character, therefore, whether good or bad, is a result, under a probationary system, of previous free volitions and acts, it becomes, in turn, an antecedent and predisposing cause, though not a necessitating cause, of the future volitions and acts of the moral free agent, whereby they will likely be in keeping with the character already formed. Conduct is thus an index of character. The Scriptures say: "A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit;" "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil;" "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." These passages of Scripture assert the great law

that exists in the moral world—viz., that conduct is an index of character, and that character determines conduct. They do not teach that sinners—those who are unholy in character—cannot repent and by the grace of God be transformed and made holy in character; nor do they teach that the children of God—those who are holy in character—may not sin, and thus forfeit their divine sonship and change their characters. They simply teach that moral character, when once formed under probation, whether good or bad, will manifest itself in volitions and actions which will correspond with the character of the free agent. By repeated volitions and acts, and by long-continued habits, character thus grows continually stronger, becomes less and less liable to change, and may reach a state of fixedness and permanence at length. When that point is reached, it becomes destiny.

When Does Character Become Destiny?—When does a moral free agent in a state of probation pass the invisible dead line that separates alterable character from unalterable destiny? Before death, or only at death? We believe that, while all must pass it at death, some may and do pass it before death. We believe it possible for God's children to live uniformly consistent and holy lives, and by fidelity to every duty and a diligent use of all the appointed means of spiritual growth to attain at length to such

a state of grace that it becomes morally certain that they will not henceforth commit a willful sin—not a point beyond which they cannot sin, but a point beyond which their free wills, so long accustomed to holy volitions, will never respond to solicitations to evil. And so we believe that some sinners become so fixed in their evil character in this life that they reach a point beyond which it is morally certain that they will never and can never be saved; not a point beyond which God cannot and will not save them if they fulfill the conditions of salvation (indeed, that point, we may say, is never reached beyond death or throughout eternity), but a point beyond which, on account of long-continued, persistent, and willful sin, their sin-bound wills will never respond to the wooings of divine grace. This point, once passed, may be said to "seal their destiny." So Dr. Joseph Alexander sung in his memorable lines:

> There is a time, we know not when,
> A point, we know not where,
> That marks the destiny of man
> To glory or despair.

Nor is this contradicted by the no less familiar lines of Dr. Isaac Watts:

> Life is the time to serve the Lord,
> The time t' insure the great reward;
> And while the lamp holds out to burn,
> The vilest sinner may return.

That is, so far as God is concerned, it is always true that, while the lamp of life continues to burn, the vilest sinner may return. A man never becomes so bad that God cannot and will not save him, provided he repents and believes; but sinners may, and sometimes do, become so confirmed in sin that there is no ground for hope that they will ever fulfill the conditions of salvation. The sinner never reaches the point where the reason of his not being saved is in God, and not in himself; but he does reach a point in the development of his moral character and destiny beyond which it is morally certain that he will never thereafter repent and believe, and at that point the dividing line may be drawn which distinguishes character that may be changed from character that is fixed in its unalterable destiny. So that, while it is true in the formation of character under moral probation that free volitions make acts, and acts make habits, and habits make character, and character makes destiny; yet, when destiny is reached, the reverse relation exists—viz., that destiny fixes character, and character determines the habits, the acts, and the volitions of the moral agent. Hence it is that probation comes at length to an end by its own laws, and good character is made permanent and is secured in goodness forever, and vicious character is made permanent and is secured in evil forever.

Probation as Related to Holiness.—We know of but two races of moral beings that have been created by God—viz., angels and men—and both alike have been endowed with free agency and placed in a state of probation, to work out the problem of their own destiny. The probation of the angels was probably completed before the creation of man. We read of "the angels that sinned" (2 Pet. ii. 4), and "kept not their first estate" (Jude 6), and that Satan, the chief of the fallen angels, "abode not in the truth" (John viii. 44). There are also angels that sinned not, but kept their first estate; these are the "elect angels," the "ministering spirits," that constitute the court of heaven, attend upon the will of the Creator, are sent forth to minister unto them who shall be the heirs of salvation, as they ministered unto Christ while in the flesh, and shall accompany him at his second coming at the end of the world. And as to man, no fact connected with his existence is more universally emphasized in Scripture than that of his moral accountability, by virtue of which, as a free agent under probation and responsible for his conduct, he is determining his character in this life, and thereby fixing his destiny in the world to come. Probation involves necessarily the possibility of sinning on the part of free moral agents. Some superficial thinkers have supposed that it would have been possible for God to make man

a free moral agent and place him in a state of moral probation where he could develop a virtuous and holy character, and yet make sin impossible to him. This could not be. To have made sin impossible to free moral agents in a world of probation would have been to make holiness impossible. But to affirm the possibility of sin in order to holiness in a free moral being is by no means the same as affirming the necessity of sin. Sin is not a necessity in order to holiness. It is man's abuse of his freedom, not any imperfection of God's moral government, which makes sin an actuality in the world. Notwithstanding the fact that the possibility of sin is necessary in order to the possibility of holiness in a free being, still the highest holiness of the race would have been realized if sin had forever remained simply a possibility, and had never become an actuality.

The Probation of Man as Affected by Adam and Christ.—Our first parents, in the exercise of their freedom, sinned, and through their sin the whole race became a fallen race. But human probation did not end then. God immediately provided the atonement in Christ for all fallen men, and established at once a new and gracious probation. The atoning value of Christ's death antedated the incarnation. Its saving benefits availed for man from the very beginning of the fall, from the first announcement that the seed

of the woman should bruise the serpent's head. Indeed, in the thought and mind of God, Christ "was slain before the foundation of the world." The world has never been without the saving benefits that come from his incarnation and death. The Father-heart of God may be trusted to have applied to man from the beginning the gracious benefits of Christ's passion and death. He was from the beginning, *per anticipationem*, the world's Saviour. If the race inherits from Adam certain moral disabilities and a bent toward sinning, it also derives from Christ certain gracious abilities for moral obedience and righteousness which serve to restore fallen man, not to the conditions of his original probation, but to such a state of probation as is in every way adapted to proving and developing his moral character. Nor was the primitive state, without original sin and without the atonement, much, if any, more favorable to testing character, or more conducive to a happy issue, than the fallen state with original sin and with the compensating, gracious benefits of the atonement. Redeemed man is everywhere throughout the New Testament regarded as being under a gracious probation here, determining his character as a responsible free agent, and fixing his destiny for eternity.

The Probation of the Heathen.—All will be held responsible for their opportunities and judged in the light of those opportunities. Even the heathen are

on probation, and will be saved or lost according as they shall be found at the last day, in the just judgment of Christ, to have lived up to the light which they had. "For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law; and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; for not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves: which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or else excusing one another." (Rom. ii. 12–15.) "And that servant, which knew his lord's will, and prepared not himself, neither did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes. But he that knew not, and did commit things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes. For unto whomsoever much is given, of him shall be much required." (Luke xii. 47, 48.) These passages teach plainly the possibility of heathen salvation, and reveal something of the law of probation by which they will be tried. God has never created a human being that could not be saved. But let no one conclude from the possibility of heathen salvation that there is a probability of their being saved, and think it a matter of indifference

whether the gospel is speedily sent to them or not. The gospel not only brings more light, but more help to live up to that light.

Free Agency and Probation as Affected by Predestination.—As we have seen already, there is no necessary conflict between the doctrines of human free agency and divine foreknowledge, but there is an irreconcilable conflict between human free agency and probation on the one hand, and divine election and predestination, as commonly defined, on the other. Of course, election and predestination are both Bible terms, and, rightly defined, stand for true Bible doctrines; and such doctrines cannot conflict with any other true doctrines. In the Bible, election is always "according to the foreknowledge of God," and it is only those "whom God foreknew" that he predestinated. This makes divine election and predestination, though occurring back in eternity, to be based on a divine foreknowledge of what free agents, in the exercise of their liberty, are going to do; whereas the common and traditional view of these doctrines makes predestination and election to be the ground of foreknowledge: God decrees, and therefore he knows; he elects and foreordains individuals to their destiny, and therefore he knows. To the question, "Does a man repent and believe because he has been elected back in eternity, *or* is he one of the elect because he repents and believes, and God foresees that fact from

eternity?" the doctrine of unconditional election and predestination answers by affirming the first alternative, while the doctrine of conditional election and predestination affirms the second alternative as that which alone can be true. This latter is commonly called conditional election and predestination, because, so far as free moral agents and their destinies are embraced within the elective decree, it is conditioned on God's foresight of what each individual concerned will freely do. And nothing, we may confidently affirm, is more certain in Christian doctrine than that the repentance, faith, and continued perseverance of an individual are determined by his own will, and not by the divine will. For, if it was the divine will that determined these things, then every individual would repent and believe and persevere unto the end.

Predestinarianism Either Modified or Abandoned by Modern Calvinists. — The Westminster Confession teaches that "by the decree of God . . . some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained unto everlasting death; and these angels and men, thus predestinated and foreordained, are particularly and unchangeably designed; and their number is so certain and definite that it cannot be either increased or diminished." "Neither are any other redeemed by Christ effectually called . . . and saved, but the elect only." This is a part of that type of theology which has dom-

inated the thought and life of a large section of the Protestant Church from the sixteenth to the close of the nineteenth century, but which is now undergoing modifications and revisions that are designed to adapt it to the more simple and scriptural faith of twentieth century Christianity. The following extract from a recent book by Dr. W. N. Clarke, of Colgate University (Baptist), will show how the subject of predestination is now treated, at least by some of the theologians of a Church which formerly believed and defended the doctrine of unconditional election and predestination:

Acts of free beings cannot be predestinated, and acts predestinated are not acts of free beings. The two ideas are mutually exclusive. Whatever room for predestination there may be in the universe, the acts of man are not included in it, if men are free. The real question, therefore, is whether men are free beings; and the answer is that the negative involves intellectual and moral suicide. If we are not free, we are not responsible; in that case we can do neither right nor wrong, and our life has no moral significance. Our nature affirms our freedom; and if we are not free, we cannot trust our nature, which affirms it, or our mental operations, which assume it; reasoning is at an end, and life is a delusion. Doubtless our freedom is limited, but surely it is real. Some hold that predestination is the fixed point that must be held, because it is a point reached by necessary *a priori* reasoning, and that our freedom can be only such as is consistent with predestination. But we must affirm, on the contrary, that freedom is the fixed point that must be held, because it is an inalienable certainty of experience, and that predestination can be only such as is consistent with it, else there is no rational and responsible life. (Outline of Christian Theology.)

A similar criticism of the doctrine of unconditional election which we find in the writings of the late Dr. L. F. Stearns, of Bangor Theological Seminary, shows that modern Calvinism is beginning to realize how indefensible are the statements of the Westminster standards in regard to this doctrine:

> It reduces human freedom to a mere name, so far as spiritual things are concerned. Faith, instead of being the free personal surrender of man's will to God, is a divine act, wrought in the soul by overmastering power. Moreover, the doctrine throws a baleful light upon the divine righteousness. The nonelect never have the opportunity for salvation. It is to no purpose to say that they are justly condemned for their sins; for the sin is not really theirs, but Adam's, and they are condemned for that which they have absolutely no power to help. If the arrangement by which Adam stood probation for the race was of God's appointment, then the sin and guilt and misery which resulted to the race were also of his appointment. Undoubtedly many who profess to hold the genuine Calvinistic doctrine find some way to evade its ethical difficulties at the expense of their logic. But the doctrine is open to insuperable objection. It stands the test neither of Scripture nor of reason. (Present Day Theology.)

It will thus be seen that the moral free agency and accountability of man is one of the most important and cardinal doctrines of a soul-saving theology. This doctrine and that of the unlimited atonement of Christ are the two main pillars of that theology, upon which the hope of the world's salvation rests. Each of these doctrines logically necessitates the other.

On the other hand, if the destiny of every human being has been fixed from all eternity by the unchangeable decree of God, it is mere mockery to preach to men that they are free agents and have the deciding of their own destinies.

Probation and the Reign of Law.—God governs the universe, in all its departments, according to certain fixed and uniform laws. The universe may be subdivided into the material or physical, the mental or intellectual, and the moral or spiritual. That the material universe is governed by or according to law is universally recognized. Men understand that if they violate these laws they suffer the consequences. They understand, moreover, that the sin of a moment may be followed by an unending penalty. If a man foolishly or thoughtlessly puts his limb under the wheel of the coming locomotive, it is but a moment until his limb is gone and he is lame for life. He does not blame the author of nature and its laws because the violation of law is followed by penalty or because the sin of a moment may be followed by a lifelong penalty. He recognizes that he is responsible for what he suffers. And so, too, the mental or intellectual world is governed according to certain laws that are well-defined and easily discoverable, and all systems of education are designed to develop the human mind in accordance with these laws. Here, also, the violation of law is inevitably followed by its penalty.

Nor does he who violates the laws of mind say that it is God punishing him when he suffers the consequences of his own violation of law. In like manner the moral or spiritual world is governed uniformly by certain fixed and unalterable laws. These laws are plainly revealed, well-defined, and easily discoverable. If we violate these laws, we must here, as elsewhere, suffer the consequences and pay the penalty. Not always do we suffer the full consequences of violated moral law at once; the infliction of penalty, in part or in whole, may be reserved to a future state. "Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sons of men is fully set in them to do evil." But while men who violate the laws of the material world and the laws of mind, and then suffer the inevitable consequences of violated law, do not say that it is God that is punishing them, but recognize the fact that they are virtually punishing themselves; yet, strangely enough, when they come to suffer the consequences of violated moral law, they speak as if it was God that was punishing them, as if their punishment was now taken from and placed beyond the realm of uniform and inevitable law and made to depend entirely upon the arbitrary will of God. It is not so; but the moral world is under the reign of universal law in identically the same sense as are the material and mental worlds, and the rewards of the

good and the sufferings of the wicked after death will be infallibly determined by the laws of moral conduct and character which reign throughout the moral government of God.

Probation as Affected by the Law of Sowing and Reaping.—Among the laws that are to be found alike in the physical, the intellectual, and the moral world is one of sowing and reaping. And the law of sowing and reaping is this: (1) that we reap what we sow, and (2) we reap more than we sow. As certain as he who sows wheat reaps wheat, or who sows thorns and briers reaps the same—as certain as he whose mind in youth is rightly trained and filled with pure and ennobling thoughts will reap the fruit thereof in mature and later life, or if poisoned with corrupting thoughts and vicious influences must reap the terrible and vicious harvest thereof—just so certain is it in the moral and spiritual world that whatsoever a man soweth in this life, that shall he also reap in the life to come; "he that soweth to his flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption; but he that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." And as the physical and mental harvest is, or may be, a hundredfold greater than the sowing, so it will be in perfect keeping with God's universal law if the harvest in eternity shall be far greater than the sowing in time. This life is the seed time; eternity is the harvest. The saint and the sinner in eternity will reap nothing but

the fruit of their own sowing here. Man makes his own character and fixes his own destiny, and reaps his own sowing. The man that is saved will be rewarded "according to the deeds done in the body," and his happiness in heaven will be proportioned to the personal holiness acquired in this life. According to the degree of holiness attained here will be one's capacity to extract happiness out of his environments in heaven. A saint may receive in the life to come more of good than he justly deserves, but certain it is that no sinner will ever, either here or hereafter, suffer more of misery than he justly deserves. God's character is the guarantee of this. "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?"

Does Justice Demand a Second Probation for Lost Sinners?—It is quite common to hear it said that justice demands that the lost should have a second probation. Let us consider this matter. Suppose our allotted threescore years and ten be divided into seven successive decades, or periods of ten years each. The first ten years, let us say, is the period of irresponsible childhood. The remaining sixty years, instead of constituting one long probation, may be divided into six successive probations of ten years each. This is legitimate. Now let us see how moral free agents stand these successive probations. Antecedently we would say that during the first probation, from ten to twenty, few if any will repent, because

the passions of youth are strong, the pleasures of sin are fascinating, and death is very far off; during the second probation, from twenty to thirty years of age, a few of the wise and prudent will make their calling and election sure by repentance and faith; during the third, from thirty to forty years of age, a goodly number will seek salvation; during the fourth, a still larger number; during the fifth, from fifty to sixty, a yet larger number; and during the sixth and last, from sixty to seventy, every remaining soul that believes in moral probation and in a future life will, without fail, make sure of his salvation, knowing that his probation is soon to end. This is the way we would think antecedently that human nature and moral free agents would act under such circumstances. But do we find that the facts confirm this? Far from it. They rather confirm the opposite. From one-half to two-thirds of all those who are saved are saved during the first probation, from ten to twenty, the period during which we would naturally think very few would be saved. From one-half to two-thirds of the remainder of the saved are saved between twenty and thirty; and from one-half to two-thirds of the remainder from thirty to forty. From forty to fifty years of age, it is rare for men to profess faith in Christ; from fifty to sixty, during the fifth probation, not one in a hundred is ever saved; and from sixty to seventy, the last probation, the period during which

we had a right to think that every sane moral free agent who believed in a future life and was unsaved would most surely repent and believe, not one in a thousand is ever saved! Statistics will corroborate these facts. Now suppose we grant another period of ten years for a seventh probation, from seventy to eighty. How many additional ones, think you, would be saved? Not one in ten thousand. But suppose we place this last probation beyond the grave, will it change the result? Not at all, even though God should himself impose no impediment in the way of the sinner's repentance. God may justly, however, and will, give no positive and supernatural aid in that future probation, His special supernatural influences being limited to this life. But if in this life, where the Holy Spirit was wooing and ministers were preaching and friends were pleading and Christians were praying—influences without which no man would ever be saved even in this world—if in this life, with all these aids to repentance, the sinner remained impenitent to the last, is it not perfectly gratuitous to suppose that such a one would repent and be saved in the other world even if probation continued there? For, remember, there could be no churches there, no Bible there, no pleading preachers and praying friends there, no wooing Spirit there—simply continued probation, with its further opportunity to repent and be saved. Even if it could be shown that those

dying in early life and the heathen (including perchance some of the heathen at our own door) have here no true and fair probation, and that therefore the very principles of probation and justice here contended for demand for these classes a probation sometime and somewhere, *that* could not affect those who have the Bible and who listen to the preached gospel, seeing that they are not among those who could claim further privileges because of their not having had a fair moral trial here. We can well afford to leave all doubtful cases and classes to Him who is infinitely just, resting assured that he will deal with all according to their privileges and opportunities. At the same time we may safely say that, if it had not been God's gracious purpose thus to deal with all men hereafter according to their opportunities here, he would have provided further probationary opportunities, for some at least, in a future state. But divine revelation in the Bible, it should be remembered, is addressed to people *about themselves*, not about God's method of saving those who die prematurely or those who have no revelation; and certain it is that the Bible everywhere assumes that those who have the gospel are standing their probation in this life.

Why a Second Probation Would Not Change the Result.—Some one may say that, after a sinner has tasted the pains and torments of the lost, he will certainly, if another probation be allowed, repent and be

saved. So, indeed, we would reason. And on exactly the same grounds we would say that a man who has once served a term in the penitentiary would, of all men, be most certain so to live in the future that he would never get there again. But here again, as a matter of fact, human nature does not do as we would antecedently suppose, but quite the opposite. Facts prove that if a man has once served a term in the penitentiary the chances are about two out of three that he will get back there if he has a chance to repeat his crime or commit a new one. A larger proportion of ex-convicts are arrested for crime than of any other class in society. That is, serving a penalty for crime not only does not make one a good man, but it rather seems to confirm in vicious character, and certain it is that it does not prepare one to stand successfully any future moral probation. We are warranted in concluding, therefore, that even if God should grant the lost a second probation, it would not change the result, because: (1) The tendency of human nature under probation is, as we have seen, to embrace first and early opportunities for salvation, and to reject later probations; (2) the environments of the lost, the absence of all those special influences toward salvation without which no one is saved in this world, would render a second probation of no avail; (3) experience in enduring punishment and serving penalty for crime seems rather to unfit than

to fit a man for standing successfully a future probation seems to have a tendency to confirm in crime rather than to remove or diminish guilt.

In What Sense Alone Probation Is Eternal.—In view of these considerations we may say that there is *a sense* in which probation is eternal, viz.—God is going to do nothing to keep a lost sinner from becoming a good and holy being. It is to be feared that preachers have too often opposed this doctrine of a future probation in such a manner as to make it appear that God arbitrarily, by an act of his sovereign will, makes human probation to end at death; and that, but for this, sinners might repent and become holy in perdition—in other words, that it is God who is keeping sinners in their guilt, and that but for the fact that he forbids their further probation they might all become holy. Such a position is utterly incapable of defense. We repeat that, so far as God is concerned, probation lasts forever, in that he is not going to forbid, or do anything to prevent, a lost sinner from becoming holy. As a matter of fact, the sinner's destiny is fixed and irretrievable beyond the grave; but it makes a vast difference, so far as Christian truth is concerned, whether we place the cause of his continuance in sin and in the abode of the lost in the sovereign will of God or in the sinner's own guilty nature and sinful character. The reason why a lost sinner will not and cannot become holy is in himself, in his

own confirmed sinful character, and not in the will of God. And we may not only say that God is going to do nothing to keep a lost sinner from becoming holy, but if he should by any chance become holy (which is the most gratuitous of suppositions) God will take him out of the abode of the lost. Indeed, if our doctrine be true, he will not need to be taken out by sovereign power; he will come out himself, for there is nothing but guilt and sin that retains him there, and, if these be gone, he can no longer remain among the guilty, but will rise, as it were by a law of moral gravitation, to his own proper place among sinless and holy beings. It is sin, and nothing but sin, that makes hell, that puts a man in hell, and keeps him in hell. If men only realized as deeply as they ought the awfulness of sin, they would be more anxious to get rid of it and less disposed to try to cover up the consciousness of their guilt in criticising the wisdom and justice of God in making it an eternal law of his universe that he that soweth to the flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, misery, and death.

We therefore conclude that "as the tree falls, so it must forever lie." And not only so, but "as the tree leans, so it will fall"—whether it be high or low, whether it be great or small, it is all the same—as it leans, so it will fall. Immortal being who may chance to read these lines, which way are you *leaning* to-day?

THE UNSEEN LINE.

There is a time, we know not when,
A point, we know not where,
That marks the destiny of men,
To glory or despair.

There is a line, by us unseen,
That crosses every path,
The hidden boundary between
God's patience and his wrath.

To pass that limit is to die,
To die as if by stealth;
It does not quench the beaming eye,
Nor pale the glow of health.

The conscience may be still at ease,
The spirit light and gay;
That which is pleasing still may please,
And care be thrust away.

O, where is this mysterious bourn
By which our path is crossed,
Beyond which God himself hath sworn
That he who goes is lost?

How far may we go on in sin?
How long will God forbear?
Where does hope end, and where begin
The confines of despair?

An answer from the skies is sent:
"Ye that from God depart,
While it is called to-day, repent;
And harden not your heart."

J. A. Alexander.

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IV.

SIN.

"Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions." (Eccl. vii. 29.)

"And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." (Gen. vi. 5.)

"Are there not with you, even with you, sins against the Lord your God?" (2 Chron. xxviii. 10.)

"Fools make a mock at sin." (Prov. xiv. 9.)

"Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you." (Isa. lix. 2.)

"The soul that sinneth, it shall die." (Ez. xviii. 4.)

"For out of the heart proceed evil thoughts," etc. (Matt. xv. 19.)

"Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin." (John viii. 34.)

"By one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." "The wages of sin is death." "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." (Rom. v. 12; vi. 23; viii. 7.)

"Sin is the transgression of the law." (1 John iii. 4.)

"And sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." (Jas. i. 15.)

To any nature lower in the scale of being than man, sin was impossible. That sin was possible to man belongs to the height on which his nature was originated; yet that it became actual was loss and ruin. The greatness of the ruin, the gravity of the shock, Scripture consistently represents as the correlate of his original dignity. The Bible account of the fall and sin, instead of vilifying human nature, implies the highest view of man and his constitution. . . . —*John Laidlaw.*

The Christian faith has mainly two things to establish: the corruption of human nature, and its redemption by Jesus Christ.—*Pascal.*

> The candid incline to surmise of late
> That the Christian faith may be false, I find;
> . . . . . .
> I still to suppose it true, for my part,
> See reasons on reasons; this, to begin:
> 'Tis the faith that launched point-blank her dart
> At the head of a lie—taught Original Sin,
> The corruption of man's heart.—*Robert Browning.*

If those who preach had been lawyers previous to entering the ministry, they would know and say far more about the depravity of the human heart than they do. The old doctrine of total depravity is the only thing that can explain the falsehoods, the dishonesties, the licentiousness, and the murders which are so rife in the world. Education, refinement, and even a high order of talent cannot overcome the inclination to evil which exists in the heart and has taken possession of the very fibers of our nature.—*Chief Justice Thompson, of Pennsylvania.*

> He finds a baseness in his blood,
> At such strange war with what is good,
> He cannot do the things he would.—*Tennyson.*

IV.

SIN.

The universal sinfulness of the human race is one of the most undeniable of all moral facts. How is it to be accounted for that all men everywhere are by nature more inclined to evil than to virtue, to do wrong than to do right? Why is it that children, left to themselves to follow the bent of their own moral natures, will inevitably go into sin rather than grow up into virtuous and holy beings? Surely these sad facts have some explanation, and it is to be hoped that for a moral ruin so universal a remedy no less universal has somewhere been provided.

Biblical Synonyms for Sin.—The true nature of sin may be best learned by first studying the different words used in the Old and New Testaments to express the various shades of meaning contained in the general term. The most common term for sin (*anomia*) means want of conformity to or transgression of the law of God. (1 John iii. 4.) Another term (*ponaria*) brings out the idea of the burden, the wearisomeness, the vanity of sin. Another (*hamartia*) means to miss the mark, deviation from the way or end appointed by God. Another (*parabasis*), to go beyond bounds. "Seeking one's own;" "enmity

against God;" "revolt against the rightful authority of God," and setting up self instead, thereby producing a state of moral anarchy or internal disorder; "depravity as the result of wrongdoing," "wickedness, pointing to its restless activity" ("The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt: there is no peace saith my God, to the wicked," Isaiah lvii. 20); "disobedience;" "carnal-mindedness" ("To be carnally-minded is death," Rom. viii. 6); "the flesh," so used because the sensuous or fleshly nature of man is a source of temptation and occasion of sin ("They that are in the flesh cannot please God," Rom. viii. 8); "moral disease" ("The whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint: from the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores." Isaiah i. 6); "breaking a covenant", "persistence in wrongdoing"—these and many other terms, partly literal and partly figurative, serve to set forth the nature of that act of man's will and that state of his soul that is called sin.

Different Kinds of Sin Distinguished.—The most common definition of sin is that of a voluntary transgression of a known law of God. This is known as actual or willful sin, and always involves moral guilt. It is to be distinguished from that sinfulness of nature which may be either acquired or inherited. Frequent and

oft-repeated willful sins, on the part of a moral free agent under probation, bring about or result in an acquired moral *habitus*, which manifests itself as a tendency or bias toward actual sin. The longer and more frequently a free agent sins, the stronger does this *habitus* or tendency become. This reflex influence or result of actual sin becomes an attribute of the moral nature, and may be called sin in the sense of moral depravity. In so far as this sinfulness of nature, this tendency toward wrongdoing, is transmitted from parent to child, it is called original sin, or hereditary depravity. If sin be so defined as to include any and all want of conformity to the law of God, as well as actual transgression of that law (and this we have seen is the meaning of *anomia*, the most definitive Bible term for sin), then that quality of man's moral nature which manifests itself as a bias toward sin, whether it be acquired or inherited, may not improperly be called sin.

The Seat of Sin in the Heart.—The real seat of sin is in the heart, which is the most significant of New Testament terms for the inner man. While outward acts constitute the largest number of sins that call for the condemnation of the law, yet all sin begins in the inner man, in the heart, the soul, the will. The essence of sin is selfishness, the setting up of self in defiance of God, the opposition of the created to the Creator's will. No outward act can be sinful

unless it springs from a sin in the inner man, the heart. "Hence sin does not consist in outward acts as such," says Dr. G. B. Stevens in setting forth the teachings of Jesus on this subject, "but in a state of the heart. Hate is the essence of murder; impurity of thought, the essence of adultery. An evil heart is the fountain out of which evil acts and passions proceed. 'From within, out of the heart of man, evil thoughts proceed.' Hence a man is corrupt or pure in proportion as his inner life is corrupt or pure. The acts and words of men are determined by their characters, as the fruit of a tree is determined by the inner quality of the tree. Words and actions are the forms in which the inner life of motive and principle expresses itself. It is because they are an index of the real inner man—the hidden man of the heart whom God alone sees—that they become the basis of the divine judgment of men. In the last analysis sin and goodness lie not in outward actions but in inner dispositions: nothing is truly good which is not rooted in a good will, nothing evil which does not spring from an evil will."

The Probation and Fall of Our First Parents.—The Scriptures teach us that our first parents, being created in the image of God, were morally innocent and sinless; that they were endowed with moral free agency, and placed in a state of probation for the purpose of testing and developing moral character.

They were placed under conditions favorable to virtue and holiness. But to make holiness possible to a free being necessitated making sin also possible, seeing that the *necessitated* holiness of a *free* being is a contradiction in thought, and a contradiction in thought is a moral impossibility in execution, even to Divine Omnipotence. As to whether a free being under probation shall become sinful or holy depends entirely upon the will of the free agent, the very essence of whose freedom consists in the fact that his will is not necessitated to a given volition by anything outside of itself. Our first parents, in standing their probation, while entirely free to obey God's commandments, yet chose to disobey and to sin against their Creator; and thus they fell. The exceeding sinfulness of their sin, with its terrible consequences, grows out of the fact that there was no excuse for it, and no cause for it outside of their own free wills. Neither the forbidden fruit which they craved, nor Satan, who, in the form of a serpent, tempted them, was the cause of their sin. In the mere physical desire for fruit there was no sin. A temptation and a tempter are only the occasions, not the cause, of sin; the only true cause of sin is in the will of the free agent. When Christ, the second Adam, "was led of the Spirit to be tempted of the devil," there were similar physical temptations and the same tempter present, but he sinned not.

The Federal Headship of Adam.—The consequences of our first parents' sin did not end with themselves. St. Paul, in the fifth chapter of Romans, teaches us that "in Adam all died"—became subject to physical death, and conditionally liable to spiritual and eternal death. But why should the sin and fall of Adam be the fall and sinfulness of the whole race? This same passage in Romans furnishes an answer. It grows out of the fact that Adam was not only the natural head of the race, but he was divinely constituted the federal head or representative of the race also. By virtue of his natural headship, the human race inherited certain qualities from him; by virtue of his moral and federal headship, he so represented the race in the probation which he stood that the race shared certain consequences of his conduct, though not individually and personally responsible for his acts. This principle is not peculiar to theology, but is universally recognized in human life and government. Nor in theology is the principle limited to the relation between Adam and his descendants. It is equally true when applied to other parents and their descendants. A father or mother may so sin that the children suffer certain consequences of the parent's sin, though the children may be in no way responsible for that sin. A ruler or representative of a government may sin and involve all his people along with himself in the consequences

of his official transactions, by which war, or debt, or suffering may entail, though no one but himself is morally responsible and personally culpable for his criminal abuse of his liberty and office. The moral culpability and personal guilt of Adam's disobedience and sin attached to and inhered in himself alone, and could not be transferred to any one else; but certain moral consequences of his sinful act may be, and must be, shared by all whom he represented. By viewing Adam thus, as the natural and federal head of the race, we may learn how his fall resulted in the fall of the race, and may also learn something of original sin: how it is, why it is, what it is.

The Interpretation of the Fifth Chapter of Romans.—Traditional theology has, in our judgment, given too great a doctrinal significance to this Pauline analogy between Adam and Christ. As an analogy it serves an excellent purpose and brings out in a most suggestive and impressive manner important truths concerning the parallelism that may be traced between the nature and effects of sin and the nature and effects of redemption. But we cannot believe that St. Paul ever meant it to be the foundation of any such doctrine of original guilt, based on the federal headship of Adam, as the Westminster divines and some other theologians have built upon it, and upon it almost exclusively; for it is safe to say that, had this famous analogy between Adam and Christ, contained

in the fifth chapter of Romans, never been introduced by the apostle, the entire history of the doctrine of original sin and the fall of man would have been vastly different from what it has been. That a doctrine of original sin and of the federal headship of Adam may be taught that is both scriptural and reasonable, we fully believe; and with that doctrine this passage is in full accord. But the traditional doctrine concerning the federal headship of Adam, the fall of man, and the guilt of original sin, that is found in the Reformed and Westminster Confessions and in the writings of theologians who have followed them, we believe to be a dogmatic exaggeration and overstatement of truth that has subjected Christian theology to much hurtful criticism and resulted in immeasurable harm. We should try to retain the truth of this theology while discarding its errors; and bear in mind that it is possible, in rebounding from a false theology, to go too far, and land in error in the opposite direction. In rebounding from the Augustinian doctrine that the human race, in consequence of Adam's sin, is *massa perditionis*, let us not land in the opposite error of Pelagianism, which denies *in toto* any and every doctrine of original sin.

The Scripture Foundation of the Doctrine of Original Sin.—In Genesis (i. 27, v. 1) we read that "God created man in his own image," "in the likeness of God made he him." After the record of the temptation

and fall of man, the inspired narrative states that Adam begat a son in his own likeness, after his own image, which inherited likeness, or image, seems to be referred to in a way to contrast it with the divine image in which man had been created. This is the inspired statement concerning man before the flood: "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." It is of "man that is born of a woman" that Job asks, "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one." "Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me," says the author of the fifty-first Psalm. Can any one read the Old Testament, and not conclude that it is the record of a sinful race, a race ever bent toward evil? And yet they were perhaps morally better than any other race. The race that Christ and the apostles had to deal with also gives every evidence of being sinful, "by nature the children of wrath, even as others." No one can read the history of the human race and escape the conviction that a universal bias toward sin characterizes all mankind. St. Paul tells us that "by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned;" that "by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation," and "by one man's disobedience many were made sin-

ners." (Rom. v. 12, 18, 19.) These passages of Scripture fully warrant the doctrine of original sin, which may be defined as that moral corruption or depravation of the nature of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby he is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, and that continually.

Is Hereditary Guilt Possible?—While voluntary sin and acquired depravity both involve moral guilt and are culpable and justly punishable, inherited depravity, considered in itself alone, does not involve guilt and culpability. No man is responsible for what comes to him by birth apart from any act of his own free will—at least not until he arrives at an age of intelligent moral accountability and finds that grace has provided and put at his command the means whereby he can change his sinful nature and bring it into conformity to the law of God. With such a provision of grace available, and after years of moral accountability have been reached, there can be no injustice in holding man responsible for the continuance of an inherited sinfulness of nature. This is probably what is meant by the phrase "original guilt" as it appears in theological literature. The *guilt* of original sin does not belong to man's nature as inherited; and hence infants, while their infancy lasts, or those who die in their infancy, are never to

be regarded as morally guilty or as liable to punishment. It is only when emphasis is placed upon the fact that an inherited bias toward sin has not been brought under the dominion of grace, as it could have been and should have been, that it may properly be called original guilt. It is utterly impossible that guilt in the sense of criminality or moral culpability can be transmitted from one man to another either by inheritance or by imputation. But it is neither impossible nor unreasonable that a man should be held accountable for what he does, or fails to do, to control and correct inherited physical, mental, and moral qualities, provided God has made it possible for him to do this. The guilt and damnation of infants is utterly impossible, and even unthinkable, in the government of a just and holy God, and many persons improperly attach this idea to the term "original sin." At least we may confidently say that if theologians of a past age attached to the term "original sin" the idea of moral guilt and liability to punishment as belonging to men purely and simply because of their descent from sinful parents, then they held a view of original sin that this generation utterly repudiates.

Do Children Suffer for Their Parents' Sin? —*Reatus culpæ* and *reatus pœnæ* are two phrases used by the Latin theologians to represent respectively the ideas of culpability, or chargeability with blame, and liabili-

ty to punishment. In no sense can the first apply to man because of the sin of Adam or the sin of any of his ancestors, near or remote; but there is a sense in which the second may be so used. In so far as punishment refers to suffering inflicted upon a wrongdoer for his own wrongdoing (and this is the most common and proper use of the term), there can be no hereditary "*reatus pœnæ;*" but in so far as all the consequences of sin do not stop with the wrongdoer, but some of them extend to and affect others who may be related to or represented by him, to that extent children may suffer on account of, or rather as an inevitable result of, the sins of their parents. If these results of sin that reach beyond the person of the wrongdoer are to be accounted among the penal consequences of sin, then we may say that, in this sense and in this sense alone, there is such a thing as hereditary punishment. In so far as physical death is regarded as a penal consequence of sin, in so far do all men suffer for the sin of Adam, even those who (as, for example, infants dying in infancy) never sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression.

Is Natural Evil a Result of Sin?—The old theologians affirmed very confidently that all natural and physical evil came to the race as a punishment for the sin of Adam. Modern theologians are by no means so certain of this, and some of them distinctly repudiate

the doctrine as at once unreasonable and unwarranted by the Scriptures. While the natural and physical evils of life (sickness, suffering, death, sorrow, affliction, poverty, and all similar ills, whether physical, mental, or social) may not have been sent by God as a punishment for sin, we may yet say that God employs them effectively in his moral government in dealing with sin. We make the following deductions from what has gone before: (1) All men are by nature inclined to do evil, and that continually; (2) this universal bias toward evil is the ground upon which the whole race is declared to be fallen; (3) the entire moral government of God on earth is adapted to fallen beings; (4) a conspicuous phase or feature of the divine government is the large use of natural or physical evil; (5) while to unfallen man natural evil would be unnatural and unnecessary, yet to fallen man natural evil is not an unmitigated evil, seeing that it is an agency, and one of the most powerful of all agencies, employed by God to correct and eradicate moral evil or sin; (6) if man's fallen state, with its attendant sinfulness and sin, has necessitated a method of government involving a large element of natural and physical evil in order to secure moral good, then it may be said that every individual of the entire race, in so far as he is subjected to a dispensation of physical evil, is suffering the penal consequences of sins that are not primarily and wholly

his own. The New Testament view of man, and notably St. Paul's conception of him, warrants the assertion that the entire race is regarded as being in a sinful condition, and this antecedent to and apart from the actual, willful sin of each individual constituting the race. But we should never lose sight of the fact that, while this is true, it is chiefly in connection with an administration of redemption for man's salvation that this truth is asserted, and the future and eternal punishment of every sinner is always conditioned upon his own personal guilt, and never represented as a result of original or race sin.

The Universality of Sin Inferred from the Universality of Atonement.—It was the fall of man and the universal sinfulness of the race that rendered necessary the incarnation and atonement of Christ. "If one died for all, then were all dead." Christ died only because of sin, and for none but sinners. He is the Saviour of all men, but none but sinners need a Saviour. He did not come to save only such as should perchance become sinners; he came to save the world, the whole human race, and therefore all were regarded as sinners. Even infants, including those who, dying in infancy, are most assuredly saved, are beneficiaries of Christ's redeeming love, and are therefore saved by and through Him who died only for sinners. All men are not necessarily

actual and *willful* sinners, but all men are nevertheless regarded as sinners by nature, and this because of the fall—at least such is Paul's doctrine.

Total Depravity Defined.—Total depravity is a term of traditional theology which is both ambiguous and misleading. It may be interpreted *extensively*—that all the faculties of the soul and the entire spiritual man (intellect, sensibilities, and will,) are affected by sin; or *intensively*—that unregenerate man is wholly bad, *massa perditionis*, and no moral good whatever is left in him. The former doctrine may be so stated as to be true; but the latter is a postulate of Augustinian theology which we think is wholly untrue except in so far as we may say that, had not the atonement intervened, then fallen man would have become wholly bad, totally depraved. But as a matter of fact, the atonement did intervene, and hence no man is left in an unredeemed fallen state. Dr. Stearns has made some suggestive utterances on this subject:

> Total depravity is an unfortunate term, because it conveys a false or, at the least, an ambiguous meaning. In the popular conception the word "depravity" is synonymous with wickedness, and the doctrine of total depravity is supposed to teach that the unconverted man is as wicked as he can be, a monster of sin, in whom there is nothing good. In spite of all assurances to the contrary, many good Christian persons suppose this to be the teaching of orthodox theologians. As soon as a technical term comes to convey a wholly false mean-

ing, it has outlived its usefulness, and there is no reason why we should hold on to this and thereby lay ourselves open to all sorts of misapprehensions. Let the term "total depravity" go. At the same time, however, we must be careful that we do not, to use the expressive phrase of the German, "empty out the child with the bath." By whatever name we call it, there is a real truth here, of vast importance in our Christian teaching and preaching. The unpenitent and unforgiven sinner stands in a wholly false relation to God; the main purpose of his life is utterly wrong, and every thought and word and act is affected by it. But it would be doing violence to the simplest facts of psychology to say that little children, who have not reached the point where they can make any of the great choices of life, are wholly alienated from God. There have been Christians in times past who have taught that little children are totally depraved; perhaps there are those who teach it still. But I need scarcely say that there is not a hint of such doctrine in the Bible, and that it finds no support in experience. The little ones are sinners and need a Saviour, but they still are guiltless of the "great transgression." We may say of them, as our Saviour himself said: "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." The modern Evangelical Church has recognized this truth in its now universal doctrine of the salvation of infants and children dying before the age of responsibility. (Present Day Theology.)

The Divine Corrective of All Sin.—The corrective of man's inherited bias to sin is found in the grace of Christ and the influence of the Holy Spirit. If the fall of man and the doctrine of original sin be thus viewed, as they always should be, in connection with and as inseparable from the universal redemp-

tion of Christ, there is nothing in them inconsistent with reason or incompatible with the justice, goodness, and love of an all-wise and all-holy God. Man is by nature morally depraved; and this depravity, as we have seen, is not total, only because Christ arrested the fall before it became complete, and brought into operation moral and spiritual forces to counteract the effects of sin. The relation of Adam to the universal sinfulness of the race is a secondary and subordinate matter, compared with the undeniable moral fact that all men, individually and collectively, are by nature sinful, and need a divine Saviour; and a salvation has been divinely provided which has in it the corrective of all sin, both original and actual.

Light on the Darkness of Sin.—The Bible, some one has said, is "human nature's sternest painter, but her best." The important question is not whether the biblical view of human nature be dark, but whether it be true. But the doctrine of Scripture about man's moral condition is not dark if you will take the whole of it together. To get the whole doctrine of Scripture on the subject, we have to consider its teachings as to what men may become, as well as its portrait of what they are; and then who will say that the anthropology of Scripture is gloomy? The system which looks steadily at all the misery and all the wickedness, and proposes a possible method whereby to cast it all out, is really the only doctrine of human

nature which throws any gleam of light on the darkness. (Alexander Maclaren.)

The Conclusion of Sin the Beginning of Redeeming Grace.—If the Scripture then, having "concluded all men under sin," leads fallen man to exclaim in despair, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" it makes haste to put in the lips of the redeemed sinner the triumphant response: "Thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." If God had not originally purposed to provide for fallen man a Saviour, it is safe to say that he would not have suffered the race as fallen to propagate itself. His holiness and love, the two crowning moral attributes of his nature, each singly, and both together, render it absolutely impossible that a fallen and sinful race should continue to exist, in his universe and under his government, unredeemed. Sin has no history apart from redemption. If it had not been said, "The Seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head," the woman would have had no seed and the race no history. If we bear in mind that the first man sinned by an abuse of his free agency and not by any constitutional defect of his nature, and that for fallen man salvation was provided and available from the very beginning, we have the answer and explanation which the Divine Theodicy gives to the question as to the why of sin in this world.

RELIEF FOR SIN.

How sad our state by nature is!
Our sin, how deep it stains,
And Satan binds our captive souls
Fast in his slavish chains.

But there's a voice of sovereign grace,
Sounds from the sacred Word:
"Ho! ye despairing sinners, come,
And trust a faithful Lord."

My soul obeys the gracious call,
And runs to this relief:
I would believe thy promise, Lord,
O help my unbelief!

To the blest fountain of thy blood,
Incarnate God, I fly;
Here let me wash my spotted soul
From crimes of deepest dye.

A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,
Into thy arms I fall:
Be thou my strength and righeousness,
My Jesus and my all.

Isaac Watts.

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V.

ATONEMENT.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John iii. 16.)

"He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. . . . And the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." (Isa. liii. 5, 6.)

"The Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." (Luke xix. 10.)

"As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." (Rom v. 19.)

"God our Saviour; who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all, . . . who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe." (1 Tim. ii. 3-6; iv. 10.)

"That he by the grace of God should taste death for every man." "He is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him." (Heb. ii. 9; vii. 25.)

"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree." "Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God." (1 Pet. ii. 24; iii. 18.)

"And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only but also for the sins of the whole world." (1 John ii. 2.)

To create man, God had only to speak; to redeem him, he had to suffer. He made man by his breath; he saved him by his blood. —*D. L. Moody.*

The atonement is the supreme effort of love to bring lost men back to their true relations with God. It is set over against the fall. The first Adam involves us; the second extricates us. Redemption furnishes motives of the very highest class to all intelligent creatures to love and obey God. After Calvary has been seen in the midst of the eternities it can nevermore be doubted that God is love.—*E. M. Marvin.*

Here the whole Deity is known,
Nor dares a creature guess
Which of the glories brighter shone,
The justice or the grace.—*Isaac Watts.*

The mission of Christ could be fulfilled only by one whose nature was human, but it could not be humanly fulfilled. He must by means of nature be the fit person, but he could only by means of God do the fit work. There was a normal manhood, but a supernatural function, and the function was made possible by two things: the quality of the manhood and the quantity of the divine action. The most miraculous thing in Christ was his determination not to be miraculous, but to live our ordinary life amidst struggles and in the face of temptations that never ceased. One principle ruled throughout—the law of sacrifice. The Father denied himself in giving the Son; the Son denied himself in becoming man and in living as the man he had become. It is through the one God-man that the many become men of God.—*Principal A. M. Fairbairn.*

V.

ATONEMENT.

Having shown how and why "the Scripture hath concluded all under sin," we come now to consider how God can be just, and yet the Justifier and Saviour of a fallen and sinful race. The "atonement" is one of a number of terms used in the Scriptures to represent God's method of saving a lost world by the incarnation, suffering, and death of our Lord Jesus Christ. The word is found but once in the New Testament (Rom. v. 11): "But we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement." But the "day of atonement" and the multitudinous typical sacrifices of the Old Testament dispensation accustomed mankind to the idea of atonement for sin, and prepared them to behold in Christ "the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." Other terms employed to represent this doctrine are: reconciliation, mediation, redemption, propitiation, expiation, sacrifice, satisfaction, and vicarious substitution.

The Atonement Defined.—In our Articles of Religion it is stated that "two whole and perfect natures —that is to say, the Godhead and manhood—were joined together in one person, never to be divided,

whereof is one Christ, very God and very man, who truly suffered, was crucified, dead, and buried, to reconcile his Father to us, and to be a sacrifice, not only for original guilt, but also for actual sins of men." His sacrificial death is there further defined as the "perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for all the sins of the whole world, both original and actual; and there is none other satisfaction for sin but that alone." In our Ritual it is also said that the Heavenly Father, "of his tender mercy, did give his only-begotten Son Jesus Christ to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption; who made there (by his oblation of himself once offered) a full, perfect, and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world." In these statements we have a definition of the doctrine of the atonement which quite accords with the teachings of the Holy Scriptures.

The Love, Justice, and Wisdom of God Find Equal Expression in the Atonement.—The originating cause of the atonement is the love of God. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." If we may conceive that, upon the fall of the race, the justice and love of God seemed for a moment to be in conflict—

the one demanding that sin should be punished, the other that man should be saved—then did the wisdom of the Triune God provide in the atonement of Christ that which satisfied fully both the justice of the divine Ruler and the love of the Creator and Father. Zaleucus, the Locrian lawgiver and ruler, found it necessary to make a law that those who committed a certain crime should have both eyes put out. It chanced that the first violator of that law was one very near and dear to him. All eyes were turned to the king to see whether justice or love would triumph. The exercise of justice alone would have resulted in the full punishment of the offender; the exercise of love alone would have resulted in setting the law aside and sparing the offender. His wisdom devised a scheme which satisfied both justice and love: he had one of the offender's eyes put out and one of his own. By thus taking part in the suffering himself, he gave a nobler expression of the importance a righteous ruler attaches to law than if, in cold blood, he had executed the full penalty upon the offender, and at the same time gave a grander proof of his love for the offender than if he had ignored the law and unconditionally pardoned him. And so when God, in the Second Person of the Trinity, becomes incarnate and, "touched with the feeling of our infirmities," "suffers for us, the Just for the unjust," "bearing our sins in his own body on the tree," he gives the

noblest proof that infinite wisdom can devise of a justice that must punish all sin and of an infinite love that would save all sinners. At the cross "mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other." In defining the atonement, therefore, with reference to the attributes of God, we may say that in the love of the Triune God is found its source, in the justice of the Triune God its necessity, and in the wisdom of the Triune God its method. Love, justice, and wisdom are the divine attributes which are thus made most manifest in the atonement.

The Atonement an Equal Expression of the Love of the Father and the Son.—It is difficult to say which should appeal to us most deeply, the love of the Father as manifested in giving and sending his own Son, or the love of voluntary self-sacrifice on the part of the Son who gave himself. Of the Father it is said in words which must be often quoted in this volume: "God so loved the world, that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." Christ says: "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." Which love is greatest, that which will give the well-beloved and only-begotten Son, or that which will give one's self? Each, we answer, is greatest. For a Father to give and send an only Son is a greater act of self-sacrifi-

cing love than to go himself; but for a Son, the reverse is true: it is a greater and more fitting proof of filial love to give self and go, than it would be to give or send a Father, were that possible. Hence in the sending and the coming of Christ we have the greatest expression of divine love that was possible to the Father and the Son.

The Reconciliation of God and Man.—The Holy Scriptures, in setting forth the doctrine of man's gracious abilities as secured by the atonement, bring before us three parties: God, the Creator and moral Governor; man, the free agent and sinner; and Jesus Christ, the Mediator and Redeemer. Incidentally, Satan, the adversary and prince of this world, also enters in; but he has no necessary place in the divine-human work of redemption. The word "atonement" (at-one-ment) literally means "to set at one," "to reconcile;" and in the New Testament it has been changed in the Revised Version to "reconciliation." The atonement is a "reconciliation" in that, by the mediation of Christ, God, the offended, and man, the offender, separated and made enemies, as it were, by sin, are reconciled. As among men it is the offended father or the offended righteous ruler, rather than the wicked son or rebellious subject, who devises and presses the plan of reconciliation, moved not less by love than justice, so in the economy of redemption we find that "God is

in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself." "And if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Hence ours is called a "ministry of reconciliation;" for we are appointed "ambassadors for Christ, to beseech men, in Christ's stead, to be reconciled to God." To reconcile the offender and the offended is the office of a mediator, and so Christ is called the Mediator: "There is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus; who gave himself a ransom for all."

Redemption by Price and Redemption by Power.—"Redemption" is a term which literally means to "buy back." There are two methods of redeeming: paying the ransom price, and rescuing by power. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." Christ redeemed the race from necessary bondage to sin, the strength of which is the law; and the ransom price which he paid is variously represented in Scripture as "himself," "his blood," "his life." This ransom price was paid not, as is sometimes falsely represented, to Satan, but to the divine government. If any one atones for sin, his own or another's, by paying the death penalty or by paying a ransom, the penalty or ransom thus exacted by law is paid not to a person, but to government. Satan is not the owner of sin-

ful men; he is, as it were, only a jailer, a prison keeper, a taskmaster of the slaves of sin. He has no "rights" in the matter of human redemption; and if, as "god of this world," he had, or still has, dominion over the race, man is redeemed therefrom not by ransom, but by power of the incarnate Son of God, who "led captivity captive." The value of a thing redeemed is learned from the ransom price that is paid for it. "Ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, . . . but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." Thus did he "redeem unto himself a peculiar people;" the Church of God, which Christ "purchased with his own blood."

Propitiation.—Propitiation, expiation, and satisfaction are also terms expressing important truths concerning the atoning work of Christ. Thus the atonement, as it refers to sin, is called expiation; as it refers to the law and to the justice of God, it is called satisfaction; as it allays the divine displeasure against sin, and brings God near to man, it is called propitiation. "We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world;" him hath God "set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood." This word (propitiation) points to something in the divine nature that calls for the atonement.

While it is true that the original Greek word (*hilasmos*) does not justify us in drawing too sharp a distinction between propitiation and expiation, and while it is also true that the heathen idea of propitiating or appeasing Deity by sacrifices and otherwise is utterly foreign to Biblical theology, it is nevertheless a fact that the justice, no less than the love of God, demanded the atonement; and it is for this truth that the word "propitiation" stands in theology.

Atonement by the Death of Christ an Expression of the Wisdom of God.—Christ's atoning death is called a sacrifice, oblation, and offering, as it is connected with the typical sacrifices of the Old Testament—all of which pointed to, and were types of, the one great sacrifice of Christ upon the cross, which alone could make propitiation for sin. "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, . . . can never with those sacrifices, which they offered year by year continually, make the comers thereunto perfect. . . . For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins." Therefore "Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." One of the lessons taught by these Old Testament sacrifices was that without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins. To Christ's faultless life and character we owe much, seeing that in him God teaches by example as well as by precept how we should live; but our salvation is everywhere throughout the

New Testament referred to his sufferings and death, to his blood shed upon the cross. He "suffered for us," "gave his life a ransom," "made peace through the blood of his cross," "reconciled to God by the death of his Son," "redeemed with the precious blood of Christ," "tasted death for every man,"—these are a few of the many expressions used to show that we are saved only because Christ suffered and died for us. And yet we are not prepared to affirm that the omniscience and omnipotence of God were shut up to this as the only method of saving fallen men. We prefer to say that the divine plan of human redemption by the death of Christ was the wisest and best method of saving man. The atonement is thus the noblest expression of the wisdom of God. Salvation by a work of loving self-sacrifice on the part of the Father and the Son is not the only method but the wisest and best method of redeeming mankind.

Atonement by Vicarious Suffering.—Christ's sufferings and death were vicarious—that is, he suffered in our stead, and his sufferings were endured because of our sin. If all suffering inflicted by law for wrong-doing, whether upon the guilty party or an accepted substitute, is to be accounted as punishment, then Christ's sufferings were penal. If, however, nothing is to be regarded as punishment but the suffering of a sinner for his own sin, then there can be no

such thing as vicarious punishment. The question as to whether Christ's sufferings are to be considered penal or not is determined rather by the definition given to the word "punishment" than by the character of his sufferings, concerning which there is little or no difference of opinion. Not all suffering on account of another's sin and for the sake of another is vicarious. The parent's suffering because of a child's sin, or a child's suffering in consequence of the sin and imprisonment or execution of a father, is not vicarious punishment; but if an innocent brother should, the law allowing it, take the place of a condemned and guilty brother, and go to the whipping post or to the penitentiary or to the gallows in his stead, *that* would be vicarious punishment. "Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust;" "redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us;" "who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree;" "he was wounded for our transgression; he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed; . . . and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all" this is the doctrine of vicarious sacrifice. The mightiest force in the universe is that of love manifested in vicarious suffering.

The Effect of the Atonement Extensively and Intensively Considered.—The efficacy of Christ's death is

unlimited in extent; it extends to all men and to all sin. He "tasted death for every man;" "gave himself a ransom for all;" "is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world;" and "will have all men to be saved;" nevertheless they may "perish for whom Christ died." In Christ a divine and human nature were united in one person. He suffered entirely in his human nature (physical, intellectual, and moral); but it was his indwelling divinity, which was incapable of suffering death, that gave infinite value to the sufferings of his human nature. This principle is not peculiar to theology. Lower animals may be as sensitive to physical suffering and death as man, yet the rational soul inhabiting the physical organism of man would cause us to subject any number of lower animals to physical death rather than one man. Had Gen. Lee been taken captive in war, it would have taken many thousands of soldiers to ransom him; should the son of a king be taken captive in a war, many might be found who were his equal physically, intellectually, and morally; yet because of the royal blood within him a value would attach to his person in an exchange of prisoners that might make him a full ransom for many—indeed, for *all*—that were held captive by the enemy. So the indwelling divinity in the incarnate Christ gives to the sufferings of his human nature an infinite value in atoning

for the sins of the human race. This is why he could "give himself a ransom for all," and be a "propitiation for the sins of the whole world;" this is why his blood can cleanse from all sin, and he "is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him." No sinner lives now, or ever has lived or ever will live, that Christ did not die for. There is no sin, and can be no sin, too deep in guilt for Christ's strong love and power to reach and remove—provided the proper conditions are met. The reason why one certain sin is unpardonable is not because the atonement is inadequate to meet it, but wholly because it is impossible to renew again unto repentance the person who has committed it.

Theories of Atonement.—There are certain theories of the atonement which should be noticed. The "moral influence" theory emphasizes the love of God at the expense of his justice, affirming that the only necessity for atonement is found in the moral nature of man, who, in order to his reconciliation with God, needs such a moral influence as is furnished in the life, sufferings, and death of the Lord Jesus Christ. This theory denies that there is any necessity for the punishment of sin in the government or nature of God or in the demerit of sin and therefore denies that the sufferings of Christ were either vicarious or penal. The "governmental" theory, admitting the profound moral influence of

the atonement upon man, yet affirms that the real necessity for such atonement lay in the governmental necessity to punish sin, or to provide a substitute for such punishment compatible with the ends of government. It denies what the "satisfaction" theory affirms: that there is a real necessity for the punishment of sin located in the nature (justice) of God and in the demerit of sin itself. The Calvinistic form of this last-named theory may be called that of "unconditional substitution," which teaches that God in eternity elected to salvation a certain definite number, and left all others in the state where Adam's fall placed them; that Christ came into this world to save only the elect, in whose stead he suffered and died; and his death secured absolutely the salvation of all for whom he died, his righteousness, both active and passive, being imputed to them. The "Universalist" theory differs from the Calvinistic doctrine chiefly in that it substitutes the whole human race for the elect; and teaches that the death of Christ secured the actual and final salvation of all men, which theory ignores the justice of God and the demerit of sin, and destroys the very foundations of moral character and moral government.

The Three Cardinal Truths Concerning the Atonement.— Any true doctrine of the atonement must recognize that in the moral nature of man, the moral government of God, the demerit of sin, and the es-

sential justice of God, in all these, is a fourfold but entirely consistent reason or necessity for the atonement. While magnifying the love and wisdom of God as seen in the atonement, no true doctrine will ever fail to recognize the justice and holiness of God. In our faith and preaching we must always place emphasis upon three truths concerning the atonement: (1) its *necessity*, there is no salvation except through the meritorious death of Christ; (2) it is *unlimited in extent*, it avails for all sinners and for all sin; and (3) it is *conditional* in its application, it is efficacious only for the penitent and believing sinner. The universality of the atonement is of God; its limitation is of man. It is the human will in time, and not the divine will in eternity, that decides who will be saved and who lost. "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." "He is the Saviour of all men, but especially of those that believe." These cardinal truths have been well expressed in John Wesley's familiar lines:

Lord, I believe thy precious blood,
Which, at the mercy seat of God,
Forever doth for sinners plead,
For *me*, e'en for *my* soul, was shed.

Lord, I believe were sinners more
Than sands upon the ocean shore,
Thou hast for ALL a ransom paid,
For ALL a full atonement made.

THE GOSPEL FEAST.

Come, sinners, to the gospel feast;
Let ev'ry soul be Jesus' guest:
Ye need not one be left behind,
For God hath bidden all mankind.

Sent by my Lord, on you I call;
The invitation is to all:
Come, all the world! come, sinner, thou;
All things in Christ are ready now.

Come, all ye souls by sin oppressed,
Ye restless wand'rers after rest,
Ye poor, and maimed, and halt, and blind,
In Christ a hearty welcome find.

My message as from God receive:
Ye all may come to Christ and live.
O let his love your hearts constrain,
Nor suffer him to die in vain!

See him set forth before your eyes,
That precious, bleeding sacrifice!
His offered benefits embrace,
And freely now be saved by grace!

Charles Wesley.

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VI.

GRACIOUS ABILITY.

"For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly." "For if through the offense of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many." "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." "For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace." (Rom. v. 6, 15, 20; vi. 14.)

"By the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain." (1 Cor. xv. 10.)

"My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." (2 Cor. xii. 9.)

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." (Eph. ii. 8.)

"For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world." (Tit. ii. 11, 12.)

In his lapsed and sinful state, man is not capable, of and by himself, either to think, to will, or to do that which is really good; but it is necessary for him to be regenerated and renewed in his intellect, affections, and will, and in all his powers by God in Christ, through the Holy Spirit, that he may be qualified rightly to understand, esteem, consider, will, and perform what is truly good. I ascribe to divine grace the commencement, the continuance, and the consummation of all good. And to such an extent do I carry its influence, that a man, though already regenerate, can neither conceive, will, nor do any good at all, nor resist any evil temptation without this preventing and exciting, this following and coöperating grace.—*James Arminius.*

Libertas a peccato et a miseria per gratiam est; libertas vero a necessitate per naturam. Ipsa gratia voluntatem praevenit praeparando ut velit bonum, et praeparatam adjuvat ut perficiat.—*Peter Lombard.*

The doctrine that whatever God claims from us he is ready to work in us by his Spirit dwelling in our hearts places the moral life of man in a light altogether new. Apart from the gift of the Spirit, we could obey God only by our own moral strength, which experience has proved to be utter weakness. But now every command is a virtual promise, for it declares what God proposes to work in us. We have learned the prayer of Augustine: "Give what thou bidst, and then bid what thou wilt."—*Joseph Agar Beet.*

The doctrine of the impartation of grace to the unconverted in a sufficient degree to enable them to embrace the gospel must be admitted. In consequence of the atonement of Christ offered for all, the Holy Spirit is administered to all. The virtues of the unregenerate man are not from man, but from God.—*Richard Watson.*

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GRACIOUS ABILITY.

The doctrines of sin and atonement must always be studied together. Neither can be understood without the other. By studying these doctrines together we learn that, while man is a fallen sinner, he is a redeemed sinner. His present spiritual state, as affected by both sin and atonement, is well defined by the term "gracious ability." As a subject of personal salvation man is appealed to as one who, though lost and needing a Saviour, is yet possessed of moral ability that makes him responsible for his lost condition.

Erroneous Types of Doctrine Distinguished.—The doctrinal system called Pelagianism makes nothing of the fall of man, and practically denies that there is any such thing as original sin; original sin consisteth simply in the following of Adam's example. According to this theory, men have by birth and by nature no more bias to sin than Adam had in his primitive state, as he came from the hand of the Creator. While this doctrine makes nothing of original sin, it in like manner makes little or nothing of atonement, and nothing of grace. Man's freedom of will, according to this theory, suffers from no moral disa-

bilities whatever as a result of the fall or of what may be called race sin. At the opposite extreme from this system of doctrine is that type of theological thought which is known as Augustinianism or Calvinism: it represents man as by nature totally depraved. Unregenerate men are fitly compared to Ezekiel's valley of dry bones. They are by nature morally incapable of exercising free will, by either accepting or rejecting the conditions of personal salvation; they are dead. Not until they are regenerated by the effectual call of the divine will have they any capacity for good. Fallen men are represented as *massa perditionis*, utterly incapable before regeneration of any moral good. The former doctrine makes man to do everything, and God virtually nothing, in the matter of personal salvation. The latter makes God to do everything, and man does virtually nothing except as he responds to the workings of irresistible grace. Semi-Pelagianism believes that man has been weakened or sickened by the fall, so that his natural state is one of moral weakness and insufficiency; he has by nature ability to begin the work of his own salvation, but unless grace comes to his rescue his natural strength will give out.

The Scriptural Doctrine Stated.—As distinct from these views, the Scriptures seem to teach, as to the moral status of the unregenerate world, that, but for the atonement, man would be, by nature, as a result

of the fall, morally dead and incapable of any exercise of free will in meeting the conditions of salvation; but as a matter of fact, no man is in a mere state of nature. Grace arrested man in his fall, and placed him in a salvable state, and endowed him with *gracious ability* to meet all the conditions of personal salvation. Fallen man has never been without the benefits and influences of the atonement. Uppermost among these benefits is what is called prevenient grace, a certain gracious influence of the Holy Spirit upon the heart and will of man that goes before regeneration. It does not act irresistibly upon any man, but is imparted to all men, and is the foundation of that gracious ability for fulfilling the conditions of salvation which all possess, and which is the ground of their responsibility for continuing in sin. Personal salvation is therefore a matter of coöperation between the divine and the human will, between God and man. We thus hold that there is some good in unregenerate human nature; it is not wholly evil, as the old Calvinistic divines taught; but the good that we find in unregenerate man is due not to nature, as the Pelagians and Semi-Pelagians teach, but to grace. Hence this doctrine is well designated by the term "gracious ability." The Scriptures, while making much of the power of sin in human nature, also make much of grace and the gracious influence of the Holy Spirit which is a result of the atonement.

Moral Freedom Is of Grace.—"The fact that man is, since the fall, still a free agent is not more essentially a necessity of his moral nature than it is the effect of grace. Its universality has this for its result, that all who are born into the world are born into a state of probation; otherwise the human spirit would have fallen back under the law of physical necessity, or in that of diabolic bondage to evil. Unredeemed spirits are responsible, but their responsibility is no longer probationary; they are responsible for a state of guilt that has become determined by their own first act become habitual. The difference put between them and us is the mystery of redeeming mercy. The children of men are in bondage to sin; this is the character which is stamped upon them by inheritance. But the bondage is not hopeless, nor is it to any mortal necessary. All men have a natural capacity of freedom to act as well as to choose, to perform as well as to will; but this, their very nature, is itself grace." In this paragraph from Dr. William B. Pope we have a statement which differs from what we have said above more in phraseology and form of expression than in the essential idea conveyed.

The Teaching of Jesus.—Jesus recognized a mixture of good and evil in men before their conversion. They were not wholly good; some, indeed, had but little good in them; but it is also true that they were

not wholly bad. "The teaching of Jesus," says Dr. G. B. Stevens, "lends no support to the doctrine of total depravity. All men are not as bad as they can be. There can be no greater contrast between the teaching, so long common in theology—that, in consequence of original sin and native depravity, all men are utterly destitute of all goodness and wholly inclined to all evil—and the attitude which Jesus assumed toward men. In even the worst of men he found a spark of goodness. He never regarded the lost as irrecoverable." His entire teaching is "absolutely inconsistent with the idea that all men are and have been from their birth morally dead and incapable of any right desires, high aspirations, or noble efforts. The contrary was the conviction of Jesus and the presupposition of all his work."

Gracious Ability a Result of the Atonement.—We thus see that gracious ability and prevenient grace are a result of Christ's atoning work. The effects of the righteousness of the Second Adam are coextensive with the sin of the first Adam. What we lose in Adam, we gain, and more than gain, in Christ. "For if through the offense of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many." "As by the offense of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men

unto justification of life." That is, the benefits of Christ's righteousness and atoning death are coextensive with the effects of Adam's sin. If through the first Adam man became a sinner, through the Second Adam he became a redeemed sinner. Christ's atonement did not remove the effects of the fall and place the race back where Adam was, in a state of moral innocence; but it provided for all the consequences of Adam's fall, and for the ultimate and entire removal of all sin.

The Effects of the First Adam's Sin and the Second Adam's Righteousness Compared and Contrasted.—The ultimate effects of Adam's sin and Christ's atonement, however, are both conditioned upon man's free agency. As we have seen, the personal guilt of Adam's transgression was not, and could not be, imputed to his descendants, no one of whom ever has been, or ever can be, lost and sent to hell on account of Adam's transgression alone. Original sin is not, in itself alone, culpable and justly punishable; at least not until the individual arrives at the age of moral accountability, and refuses to fulfill the conditions (repentance and faith) divinely provided for its suppression in regeneration, after which time he may justly be held responsible for his original sin and all its consequences. In like manner, no man will be saved and sent to heaven on account of Christ's righteousness alone, which, while it made possible

the salvation of all, necessitated the salvation of no one. That is, while Adam's sin and Christ's righteousness both materially affect the problem of man's sin and salvation, they do not in any way set aside the great and universal law of moral free agency and probation; by which every man has the deciding of his own destiny. Man's *gracious abilities* through Christ are quite equal to his moral disabilities through the fall. The fallen state, with original sin and the accompanying benefits of Christ's atoning work, doubtless furnishes as favorable conditions for human probation as did the unfallen state without Christ. A pair of scales in equilibrium is suited to testing the weight of substances. If a pound weight be placed on one side, so as to destroy the equilibrium, it may be restored in either of two ways: by removing the weight there, or by placing an equal weight on the other side. Why God chose the latter method instead of the former; why, instead of ending the fallen race by putting Adam and Eve to death then and there, and creating a new, unfallen race, he chose to allow them to live and become the progenitors of a fallen race, and to redeem that race by the incarnation and death of his Son, we may not be able to explain further than to say that no wrong has been done to man, the probationer. But the wisdom, goodness, holiness, and love of God are manifested far more in the redemption of fallen man than

they could have been by the mere creation of one or many unfallen beings like Adam and Eve.

'Twas great to speak a world from naught;
'Twas greater to redeem.

Original Grace Coextensive with Original Sin.—We therefore conclude that grace is quite as "original" as sin is. "Every writer of Scripture, as well in the New Testament as in the Old, constantly connects evil with the system of deliverance from it. Sin is always discussed, defined, dwelt upon in all its development and issues, at the foot of the altar in the Old economy and at the foot of the cross in the New. The first effect of the redeeming intervention was to preserve the nature of man from sinking below the possibility of redemption. The fall was the utter ruin of nothing in our humanity, only the depravation of every faculty. Original sin, as condemnation in the fullest sense, and as an absolute doom, never passed beyond Adam and the unindividualized nature of man. It was arrested in Christ as it regards every individual, and changed into a conditional sentence. Original sin is the sin of Adam's descendants as under a covenant of grace. What it would otherwise have been we can never know. There would then have existed no federal union of mankind. The souls of Adam and Eve would have added only two more to the spirits of evil. Original sin and original grace met in the mystery of mercy at the very gate of Paradise."

THE WORK OF GRACE.

Grace! 'tis a charming sound!
Harmonious to my ear!
Heaven with the echo shall resound,
And all the earth shall hear.

Grace first contrived the way
To save rebellious man,
And all the steps *that* grace display
Which drew the wondrous plan.

Grace taught my wand'ring feet
To tread the heavenly road,
And new supplies each hour I meet
While pressing on to God.

Grace all the work shall crown,
Through everlasting days:
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise.

Philip Doddridge.

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VII.

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

"Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." (Zech. iv. 6.)

"Except a man be born of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." "It is the Spirit that quickeneth." (John iii. 5, 6; vi. 63.)

"I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." "The Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me." "When he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." (John xiv. 16, 17; xv. 26; xvi. 8.)

"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts ii. 38.)

"The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us." "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." (Rom. v. 5; viii. 14.)

"Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh." (Gal. iv. 6; v. 16.)

"Through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." "In whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God through the Spirit." (Eph. ii. 18, 22.)

"All these worketh that one and the selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will." (1 Cor. xii. 11.)

The characteristic differences between the work of Christ and that of the Holy Spirit may be summed up in four statements: (1) All outgoing seems to be the work of Christ, all return to God the work of the Spirit; (2) Christ is the organ of external revelation, the Holy Spirit the organ of internal revelation; (3) Christ is our Advocate in heaven, the Holy Spirit is our advocate in the soul; (4) in the work of Christ we are passive, in the work of the Spirit we are active.—*A. H. Strong.*

The Holy Spirit is the spirit of conviction, enlightenment, quickening in the sinner; and of revelation, remembrance, witness, sanctification, consolation, to the saint. The Spirit enlightens the sinner as the flash of lightning lights the traveler stumbling on the edge of a precipice at night; enlightens the Christian as the rising sun reveals a landscape which was all there before, but which was hidden from sight until the great luminary made it visible. Christ's advocacy before the throne is like that of legal counsel pleading in our stead; the Holy Spirit's advocacy in the heart is like the mother teaching her child to pray for himself.—*Donovan.*

The Holy Spirit is the continuator of the redemptive process in the world; he makes real and effective in human life the truth which the earthly mission of Christ revealed. As the Spirit of truth, he interprets those divine realities which constitute the inner meaning of the life of Jesus, and fosters in men the spiritual life which accords with them. . . . The Spirit does not bestow any new or different revelation; but rather opens the eyes of men to see ever deeper meanings in what Jesus Christ has revealed in his teaching and life. The connection, therefore, between Christ's historic action and the Spirit's work is a very close one. . . . The historic action of Christ was temporal; it began and it ceased. The Spirit's work goes on perpetually accomplishing the fulfillment of the great saving process.—*G. B. Stevens.*

VII.

THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Reason and revelation alike declare that there is and can be but one living and true God. This one God, however, is revealed in the Holy Scriptures in three Persons: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. To each of the persons in the Godhead is committed a certain specific office and work in connection with the divine government of the world and the salvation of mankind; and while it is not improper to attribute to God absolutely, without regard to personality, that which either of the three Persons of the Godhead may do, yet there is a propriety and fitness in distinguishing the work of each divine Person. Although it may not be possible to *separate* the work of one divine Person from that of another, it is possible to *distinguish* the one from the other. Hence there is a certain phase of the all-comprehensive work of God that may be most fittingly referred to God the Father, another to God the Son, and another to God the Holy Spirit. The office and work of the Third Person in the Trinity is commonly designated in theology as the Dispensation of the Spirit. The doctrines of Christianity pertaining to the personal salvation of redeemed sinners all come under

this head. While we are here concerned only with that phase of the Spirit's work that is connected with man's salvation, it is perhaps well, before entering upon a discussion of these doctrines in detail, to speak of the general relation which the Holy Spirit sustains to the work of personal salvation as a whole.

The Work of the Holy Spirit as Related to Christ.—It was by revealing the Fatherhood of God and the personality of the Holy Spirit that Christ made known the triunity of the Godhead. This was but one of a number of important truths concerning the divine Being that awaited the advent of Christ for their full revelation. The unity and spirituality of God were as fully revealed in the Old Testament as in the New; but it is only when the light of the New Testament is turned back upon the Old that the three divine Persons are seen to have been present and active from the very beginning. Once or twice God had been called "Father" in the Old Testament, but it was more as a figurative name than because it was felt to be a reality that he was so designated. Christ reveals God as the Father of all men, but especially of those who, by fulfilling the proper spiritual conditions, become partakers of the divine nature and fellow heirs with his divine Son, Jesus Christ. Christ not only brought a new revelation of God by what he said but still more by what he was in his own person: "He that hath seen me," said he, "hath seen

the Father." The moral and spiritual attributes which Christ manifested as the Son of God and the Saviour of men were the best and truest revelation ever given of the moral and spiritual attributes that belong to the Father. Christ said, "If I go not away, the Comforter will not come;" he might also have said just as truly, "If I had not come and prepared by my work for him, the Comforter would not have come." The work of the Holy Spirit is dependent upon the work of Christ. Thus it is that Christ's coming reveals not only himself but also the Father and the Spirit in their power and Godhead.

The Application of the Atonement to Man's Salvation the Work of the Spirit.—If we say that "God the Father plans, God the Son executes, and God the Holy Ghost applies," we have a formula which states with approximate accuracy the specific work of each of the three persons of the Trinity in the great work of human redemption. The execution of the divine plan of redemption was committed to the Son, and as fulfilled it is called the atonement. The application of the atoning work of Christ to the actual salvation of men is the work of the Holy Ghost, whose gracious influences act upon and coöperate with the free will of man. It is but another method of stating the same great truth to say that the originating cause of man's salvation is the love of God, the meritorious cause is the sacrifice of Christ, the efficient

cause is the power of the Holy Spirit, and the determining cause is the free will of the redeemed sinner.

Elements of Personal Salvation.—If the work of personal salvation be analyzed and separated into its various parts, it may be said to consist of the following elements: (1) Conviction of sin, which is that work of the Holy Spirit upon the conscience of the sinner by which he is awakened and made to realize his sinful and lost condition; (2) repentance, which is such godly sorrow on account of sin as leads to the forsaking of all sin and the confession of sin; (3) faith, or that belief of the mind and trust of the heart by which the penitent sinner accepts Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour; (4) justification, which is something done for us, being that act of God by which he pardons all the past sins of the penitent believer; (5) regeneration, which is something done in us, being that act of God by which he breaks the dominion of the sin of nature and creates us anew, which transformation is called the new birth, and is followed by adoption into the family of God; (6) the witness of the Holy Spirit to the spirit of the regenerate believer, testifying to his pardon and adoption, and producing a divine conviction of salvation; (7) sanctification, which refers to that work of the Holy Spirit in cooperation with the regenerate spirit which separates the soul from sin and carries on and completes the work begun in regeneration.

Three Salvations Distinguished.—The first six elements enumerated above constitute "conversion," as this term is popularly used. There are three salvations spoken of in the Bible. "Repent of thy sins and believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved;" this is the first. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;" this is the second, and it is a continuous, progressive work. "He that endureth to the end, the same shall be saved;" this is the third, and refers to final salvation at the last day. We shall discuss each of these seven doctrines of grace more fully in detail hereafter. Our present object is to present them in their relations to each other as constituting together the one integral work of salvation. A clear knowledge of all these doctrines may not be necessary to salvation, but there can be no intelligent type of piety that is not based upon both an intellectual and an experimental knowledge of all that the Scriptures represent as necessary to salvation.

Personal Salvation a Divine-Human Work.—Personal salvation is a result of coöperation between God and man, between the divine and the human will. Although salvation is of God's free grace, it is none the less of man's free choice. While man cannot save himself, neither can God save him, in keeping with the revealed principles of his moral government, unless man himself chooses to fulfill the

conditions of salvation. As a mere matter of power, of course the omnipotent divine will can cause the finite human will to do anything, to put forth any volition whatsoever; but such a divinely necessitated human volition could not be free, and in the matter of personal salvation man is entirely free to fulfill or not to fulfill the conditions of salvation. The Bible represents God as being without partiality and no respecter of persons: "God our Saviour will have all men to be saved and to come unto a knowledge of the truth," and is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." Personal salvation and damnation, therefore, are not determined by election and nonelection in eternity, but by the free will of man. The condition of fallen man as affected by the atonement is one of gracious ability to fulfill all conditions necessary to salvation; but while his present moral ability is of grace, that grace itself is free and not arbitrary and irresistible. Dr. Fairbairn has stated this truth strongly thus:

> Freedom is of the essence of man, and he must be freely saved to be saved at all. Were he saved at the expense of his freedom, he would be not so much saved as lost. For the very seat and soul of personality is will; and were this will suspended, especially in the article of its supreme choice, the personality would be destroyed; and what resulted would be not a new man, but another man from him who had been before. Moreover, those alone can freely stand who have been freely saved, and without freedom there can be no obedience.

While the Fatherhood of God will ever love, and ever seek to create happiness; and the Sovereignty of God will ever govern, and ever seek to expel sin and create righteousness; yet neither Fatherhood nor Sovereignty will ever forget that the son is a free citizen, and must be freely won to submission and freely preserved in obedience. Sin is not to be vanquished either by being divinely destroyed or by the compulsory restoration of the sinner, but by his free salvation; and should this fail of accomplishment, yet the goodness of God will at least have been so manifest that all the universe will feel that it has had a vision of infinite love in the attempt that was made to save the sinner in the only way that he could be saved—that is, through his own free will.

The Holy Spirit's Preparation of Man for Salvation.—Conviction of sin is a result of the Holy Spirit's application of the preached word and the divine law to the heart and conscience of a sinner, and is often irresistibly produced; but while the sinner may be convicted against his will, and in spite of efforts to the contrary, yet he is not irresistibly converted. Under conviction he is free either to resist the wooings of the Spirit or to follow the Spirit's leadings on to repentance and faith. A moral free agent is never more free than in that intense and critical moment when he is irresistibly awakened and brought to a knowledge of his true condition. It is the most critical and responsible moment in all his life; for then it is that his eternal destiny is hanging in the balance, and nothing but his own will can determine which way the scales of destiny shall be made to turn.

Man's Part in His Own Salvation.—Repentance and faith are, therefore, man's work, the only office of the Holy Spirit here being to graciously aid man in fulfilling these human conditions of salvation. Justification and regeneration, on the other hand, are entirely God's work; with them man has nothing to do, save that he performs the conditions on which the pardon and regeneration of his soul are suspended. In the Calvinistic system regeneration comes first; and faith, repentance, and justification follow. Faith is, according to Calvinistic theology, the first act of a regenerate soul. Regeneration, which is confused with "effectual calling" and irresistible grace, must needs come first because the fallen human race are regarded as totally depraved, as absolutely dead in sin, to exact conditions of whom would be like demanding acts of a physically dead man as a condition of imparting life to him. If God had from all eternity unconditionally elected certain ones to salvation, and foreordained the means and the time of their efficacious call and conversion; if it were true that regeneration comes first, and faith and repentance follow, then would the preaching of the gospel to the unconverted and the call of sinners to repentance and salvation seem to be a useless work, and the present mode of preaching the gospel and pressing the claims of the Christian religion upon the consciences of sinners could not be justified. More faith-

ful to Scripture is that theology which teaches that man, though fallen, and in a sense morally dead, is yet recognized as a living and responsible moral agent, endowed graciously with ability to seek and obtain salvation through divinely appointed conditions (repentance of sin and faith in Christ), on the fulfillment of which God graciously pardons all his past transgressions, and so transforms his sinful moral nature as to deliver him from the dominion of sin and make him a new creature in Christ. It is of the greatest importance that we have true scriptural views concerning the doctrines of personal salvation. We should make no mistake in answering the question of the awakened sinner: "What must I do to be saved?"

God's Part in Man's Salvation.—It may be asked why personal salvation on God's part consists of both justification and regeneration. Why would not justification alone or regeneration alone suffice to make complete the salvation of a soul? The answer is not far to seek. It is because there are two kinds of sins: actual sin, or voluntary transgression of the law of God; and the sin of nature, which consists of both original sin and the reflex influence on moral character of repeated acts of sin. From both of these kinds of sin man needs to be saved. Justification, or pardon, concerns actual sin alone, and has nothing to do with the sin of nature; and so repen-

tance also is of actual sins, and not of original sin. Regeneration, on the other hand, has to do exclusively with the sin of nature—original sin and the *habitus* of sin, or hereditary and acquired depravity. A tendency toward disease (consumption, for example) may be inherited, or it may be superinduced by acts of imprudence and by sickness, or it may be both inherited and superinduced; and if so, the two tendencies run together and become one. And so it is with fallen man: he inherits a bias toward sin; and this is strengthened by the effects of actual sin, both alike calling for that divine act which is designated as regeneration. If man were simply justified, and not at the same time regenerated, his past sins would be pardoned, but he would be left under the dominion of his sinful nature, and would necessarily continue to sin. Hence regeneration is represented as "breaking the dominion of sin," "cleansing the moral nature," "being born again," "created anew." Acts of sin may be compared to the black characters written upon a sheet of paper; the sin of nature, to discoloring elements that enter into the very fiber of the paper itself. The blotting out of sins (Acts iii. 19) is the pardon of all actual transgressions, but another and different act is required to cleanse and purify the sin-polluted nature of man. Justification and regeneration always take place at the same time, and are conditioned on the same act of faith.

The Holy Spirit's Seal to the Believer's Salvation.—Conviction of sin is the witness of the Spirit to the sinner's true condition, and so the witness of the Spirit to the regenerate believer may be called conviction of salvation. It is thus that the Holy Spirit both begins and crowns the work of personal salvation. The soul that undergoes all these experiences is a genuine and a happy convert, and nothing less than an experience of all these elements of personal salvation entitles one either to receive from God, as a sacred seal to his salvation, the witness of adoption, or to be regarded by man as a new creature in Christ.

Sanctification a Divine-Human Work.—Great as is the work above described in the salvation of a soul, it is not all that is to be done; indeed, it is nothing more than entrance upon the Christian life. And the Christian life does not consist in merely retaining what has been thus attained. The victory over sin has not yet been fully and finally won; the first great battle has been successfully fought, and the long warfare has begun. All sin "in sight" was given up at and in "conversion;" but other sin will presently come in sight as the Christian advances and as spiritual vision grows clearer. And all holiness and love and duty "in sight" were welcomed, embraced, and assumed according to the degree of knowledge and faith then possessed; but knowledge and faith will increase, and soon it will appear that if the character at-

tained in justification and regeneration was regarded as "perfection," it was a very imperfect perfection. Sinlessness, entire holiness, the perfect life—that is the ever-advancing goal that is ahead of the regenerate child of God, and the progressive divine-human work by which it is attained is what in most systems of theology is designated as sanctification.

The Danger of Making Salvation Too Easy.—"Quit your meanness, and be saved," may pass for a "short method of salvation" and "religion made easy," and may be followed by shaking the preacher's hand and joining the Church; but it is not the full and complete salvation from sin that is described in the Bible. Conviction of sin, repentance, faith, justification, regeneration, the witness of the Spirit—all these are necessary to make a genuine Bible Christian. Nor have we any right to make personal salvation any simpler or easier than the Bible makes it. When conversion is based upon an intelligent understanding and a genuine experience of all these elements of salvation, then, and then only, does it mean experimental religion and impart spiritual power. Nor should we recognize any conscious sin as compatible with the regenerate state. This ideal of holiness is the birthright privilege and duty of every child of God from the very moment of his regeneration; and we must not lower God's high standard to make it fit man's shortcomings.

A PRAYER TO THE SPIRIT.

Spirit of faith, come down,
  Reveal the things of God;
And make to us the Godhead known,
  And witness with the blood.
'Tis thine the blood t' apply,
  And give us eyes to see,
Who did for every sinner die
  Hath surely died for me.

No man can truly say
  That Jesus is the Lord,
Unless thou take the veil away,
  And breathe the living word.
Then, only then, we feel
  Our interest in his blood,
And cry, with joy unspeakable,
  "Thou art my Lord, my God!"

O that the world might know
  The all-atoning Lamb!
Spirit of faith, descend, and show
  The virtue of his name.
The grace which all may find,
  The saving power, impart;
And testify to all mankind,
  And speak in every heart.

Inspire the living faith,
  Which, whoso'er receives,
The witness in himself he hath,
  And consciously believes;
The faith that conquers all,
  And doth the mountain move,
And saves whoe'er on Jesus call,
  And perfects them in love.

Charles Wesley.

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VIII.

CONVICTION OF SIN.

"And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." (John xvi. 8.)

"Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts ii. 37.)

"Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." (Luke v. 8.)

"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. vii. 24.)

"Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, . . . for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." (Isa. vi. 5.)

"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him." (John vi. 44.)

"And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power." (1 Cor. ii. 4.)

We are to seek the office and work of the Holy Spirit, not so much in the occasional examples of supernatural power which accompanied the apostolic preaching and work, as in that great movement of enlarged understanding of truth, of stronger moral convictions, of deeper, larger, and more fully assured faith, which, beginning at Pentecost, laid the foundations of the Christian Church. . . . No part and office of the work of the Spirit is more conspicuous in the history of the Church than that of awakening conviction in the hearts of those to whom the gospel is preached. It lies at the very foundation of the work of the world's redemption from sin. From the prehistoric memories of redemption down to the fullness of the Christian dispensation, conviction of sin has been an important element of saving religion. In the Christian Church it is the very center and secret of its saving power. The gospel triumphs only as men are deeply convicted of their sin.—*President Burwash.*

It is by the preaching of the law that sinners are convicted of their sin. The law is God's looking-glass given to man to enable him to see himself. When a man measures himself by himself, or by his neighbor, he is all right; but when he measures himself by God, he sees how bad he is. I promised one morning to take my little boy out riding. He clapped his hands in glee, and asked me if I would not take him to Lincoln Park to see the bears. I told him I would. His mother had him washed and dressed some time before I came with the vehicle. He went out into the yard and began to play in the dirt, and got covered with it. When I drove up, he came running. When I saw him I refused to take him in. He wanted to know why. I told him his face was dirty. "No, papa, I'm clean," he replied; "mamma has washed me clean." I could not get him to believe that he was dirty until I took him inside the house and held him before a large mirror. That stopped his mouth. Tears came into his eyes, and he said: "O, papa, I see; I'm dirty, I'm dirty." The looking-glass did the work. And so the law of God shows a sinner how he appears as God sees him. But, my friends, I did not take the looking-glass to wash my boy's face with.—*Dwight L. Moody.*

VIII.

CONVICTION OF SIN.

Sin has been already defined as any want of conformity to, or transgression of, the law of God. It is both original and actual. By original sin is meant that sinfulness that characterizes the nature of all the descendants of Adam, and manifests itself as a bias toward evil. Actual sins are voluntary trangressions of a known law of God. Without a revelation of the law of God and a knowledge of that revealed law, there could be no actual sin and no personal guilt. Actual sin is, first of all, internal; it is a volition or act of the soul, by which the created will sets itself in opposition or defiance to the will of the Creator. The execution of a sinful volition becomes a sinful act. The law of sinful development in a free moral agent under probation, as already explained, is this: Sinful volitions make sinful acts; sinful acts often repeated make sinful habits; sinful habits long continued in make sinful character; and sinful character at length determines and fixes unalterably the sinner's destiny. The tendency of sin is to lull to sleep and deaden the conscience in proportion as the power and guilt and danger of sin increase; and from this deadly sleep of

sin the sinner can be aroused only by the Holy Spirit, whose influence is an ever-present accompaniment of the preached word and of all other efforts to save lost souls.

Conviction of Sin Defined.—When a sinner, under the preaching or reading of the Word of God, awakes to a due sense and realization of his sinful and lost condition; of the dominion of sin over him, and his powerlessness to change his sinful nature; of his guilt before God on account of his many sins in word, thought, and deed—then he experiences what in Biblical and theological language is called conviction of sin. To produce this conviction of sin is the first specific work of the Holy Spirit in the salvation of an individual soul. "However obstinately and effectually the truth may be resisted as a ruling power, as truth it cannot be resisted." Hence a man may be convicted of his sins not only without any active effort of his own will, but even against his will. This does not mean, as we shall presently see, that he may be converted against his will.

Scripture Proof and Instances of Conviction.—When Christ promised to send the Holy Spirit, he said: "And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment." (John xvi. 8.) In the Revised Version this same passage reads: "And he, when he is come, will convict the world in respect of sin, and of righteousness, and of

judgment." In fulfillment of this promise the true preaching of the word of salvation is in "demonstration of the Spirit and of power." The effect of Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost was to produce conviction and is thus described: "Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do?" Paul's conversion was preceded by conviction: "And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice, saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks. And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts ix. 4–6.) The conversion of the Philippian jailer is described in similar language: "And [he] came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, and brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (Acts xvi. 29, 30.)

The Effect of Conviction.—The first effect of conviction of sin is to lead a man to abhor himself. Thus in Isaiah (vi. 5–7): "Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, . . . for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts. Then flew one of the seraphim unto me, having a live coal in his hand, which he had taken with the tongs from off the altar: and he laid it upon my mouth, and

said, Lo, this hath touched thy lips; and thine iniquity is taken away, and thy sin purged." "Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord," said another. Sin cannot endure the presence of the holy God; either the sin must be removed and purged, or the guilty sinner must withdraw from that God who is "a consuming fire." "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. vii. 24) is the exclamation of a man under conviction, groaning to be delivered. But the answer is not far off: "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." If under the overpowering sense of guilt the convicted sinner is made to feel that "the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint," that "from the sole of the foot even unto the head there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores," the Spirit that thus convicts makes haste to add: "Wash ye, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; learn to do well; . . . Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." (Isa. i. 16–18.)

The Holy Spirit's Work in Conviction Primary and Fundamental.—The Holy Spirit is the author of every movement of man's soul toward salvation; but his influence implies. and, indeed, requires, a certain co-

operation of the human agent before the salvation of any soul is accomplished. The spirit of grace, which is but another name for prevenient grace, "is the sole efficient cause of all spiritual good in man: of the beginning, continuance, and consummation of religion in the human soul." Grace is the love of God for fallen man, as shown in and through Christ, with an emphasis upon his ill desert through sin; and when it takes a personal form it need not be distinguished from the Holy Spirit, who applies the meritorious atonement of Christ to the actual salvation of men. "My grace is sufficient for thee." "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord." "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it [that is, the divine plan of salvation through faith] is the gift of God." Thus, no matter how true it is that man's free will determines the question of his own salvation, divine grace ever has the preëminence, both in the provision and the application of redemption. "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him," and this drawing is the specific work of the Holy Spirit. The fact that "it is God which worketh in us, both to will and to do of his good pleasure," is given by the inspired writer as the reason why we should "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling." Without the assurance that God is working in us, man's salvation would be hope-

less, it matters not how much he should work himself.

Varying Manifestations of Conviction.—The effects of conviction are very different in different individuals, being dependent upon temperament, knowledge, past character, age, and various other circumstances. A person of a demonstrative physical and mental temperament, under conviction, would likely be more powerfully swayed by emotion than one of an opposite temperament. A child seeking salvation cannot be expected to have the accompaniments and signs that often characterize the conviction of one who has been for many years a sinner. A "moral man," when moved to seek salvation, rarely ever has the powerful compunctions of conscience that characterize the excessive and outbreaking sinner. A certain amount of feeling usually accompanies conviction of sin; but conviction, properly speaking, belongs to the intellect rather than the emotions; it is knowledge, rather than feeling. Occasionally a man says that he knows he is a sinner, and wants to be saved, but that he does not "feel" that he is a sinner, and imagines that he cannot be converted until he "feels" convicted. An aroused conscience is the true test. If conscience and consciousness bear witness to sin and to the need of salvation, the amount of feeling possessed is a matter of altogether secondary consideration. "All the fitness he requireth is to feel your need of him."

One may be truly convicted of sin, and yet through mistaken notions not realize it. At the close of a heart-searching sermon, a man once came forward for prayer. The preacher welcomed him, and said: "Do you feel that you are a sinner and want to be saved?" "No," said he, "I have come because I have absolutely no feeling whatever. I know I am a sinner, and I thought that, if I could sit absolutely unmoved under such an appeal as that, I was surely in danger of being forever lost; and so I have come to ask the prayers of the Church, chiefly because I have no feeling whatever, but I want to be convicted of sin." Of course he had all the conviction of sin and all the feeling that were necessary for seeking and obtaining salvation. As a matter of fact, he was soon soundly converted, and became a most useful member of the Church, though it became necessary for him to learn that, for himself at least, being a Christian and serving God was a matter of principle and not of feeling, for the looked-for "feeling" never came.

The Spirit's Influence Not Irresistible in Conviction.—It was a saying of one of the early fathers that "He who made you without you, and redeemed you without you, will not save you without you." While the Holy Spirit may, and often does, irresistibly convict a sinner of his sin, he does not irresistibly convert and save him from his sin. Conviction is not always

followed by conversion, as is shown by the case of Felix: "And as he [Paul] reasoned of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled, and answered, Go thy way for this time; when I have a convenient season, I will call for thee." (Acts xxiv. 25.) There is no evidence that the "convenient season" ever came. "My Spirit shall not always strive with [or rule in] man" is a passage of Scripture which implies that man may resist or drive away the Spirit that wooes, draws, strives with, and convicts him. "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears," said St. Stephen, "ye do always resist the Holy Ghost: as your fathers did, so do ye." "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life," said the Master. It is not unfrequently the case at revivals of religion that one who "comes to scoff remains to pray;" one who fights against the Spirit's influence may, in spite of himself, be profoundly convicted, and then, when convicted, he may cease to resist the Holy Ghost, and may surrender to Christ and be saved. But while this is often happily the sequel to conviction, yet such is the nature of moral free agency that man's sinful and stubborn will can resist all the influences of the Spirit and all the overtures of mercy, and refuse to give up the life of sin of which he stands consciously convicted. However awful it may be to contemplate such an alternative for a sinner after he has been once awak-

ened, yet such is sometimes his guilty choice, and his end is death.

Conviction of Sin a Moral Crisis in Life.—Convictions of sin oftenest occur during revivals of religion and under the preaching of the word. Nevertheless, as the agent that produces conviction is the Holy Spirit, and as the instrument is chiefly the word—whether as preached, or read, or spoken, or sung, or prayed, or lived, matters not—conviction of sin may take place at any time. When a person is convicted of sin, he is confronted with a moral crisis in his life. It is a point, rather than a prolonged period. It is too intense and terrible an experience to be prolonged. If one under conviction does not soon yield to the Spirit, his influence is withdrawn; his voice, not being heeded, ceases to be heard; and the sinner settles down into a state of spiritual indifference, to arouse him from which is more difficult than before he was convicted. It is a fearful thing to trifle with conviction of sin, and to drive away the Spirit of God when he is striving with the immortal soul, warning of sin and the judgment to come, and wooing to Christ and eternal life. Those who are "almost persuaded" to yield and seek salvation at one revival service are rarely ever the ones who are "fully persuaded" at the next return of a season of grace, but are generally farther away from Christ and harder to reach and to move than they were before. The

gospel is a savor of life unto life, or else of death unto death. It is possible to grieve away the Spirit of God, so that he may never return again. What fearful words were those uttered by the Master: "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, which killest the prophets, and stonest them that are sent unto thee; how often would I have gathered thy children together, as a hen doth gather her brood under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate: and verily I say unto you, Ye shall not see me, until the time come when ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." "And when he was come near, he beheld the city, and wept over it, saying, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes." A "day of grace" comes to all, and such is the day when the Spirit of God convicts of sin. "If slighted once, the season fair may never be renewed." The natural inquiry of every truly awakened soul is, "What must I do to be saved?" to which the inspired answer is: "Repent of thy sins, and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." He who convicts stands ready to convert.

A PRAYER FOR CONVICTION.

Come, O thou all-victorious Lord,
  Thy power to us make known;
Strike with the hammer of thy word
  And break these hearts of stone.

O that we all might now begin
  Our foolishness to mourn;
And turn at once from every sin,
  And to the Saviour turn!

Give us ourselves and thee to know,
  In this our gracious day;
Repentance unto life bestow,
  And take our sins away.

Convince us first of unbelief,
  And freely then release;
Fill every soul with sacred grief,
  And then with sacred peace.

Impov'rish, Lord, and then relieve,
  And then enrich the poor;
The knowledge of our sickness give,
  The knowledge of our cure.

That blessed sense of guilt impart,
  And then remove the load;
Trouble, and wash the troubled heart
  In the atoning blood.

Our desp'rate state through sin declare,
  And speak our sins forgiven;
By perfect holiness prepare,
  And take us up to heaven.

Charles Wesley

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[See references to the next chapter. Most writers treat "Conviction of Sin" as a part of "Repentance."]

IX.

REPENTANCE.

"Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matt. iv. 17.)

"I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." (Matt. ix. 13.)

"Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." (Luke xiii. 3.)

"And Zaccheus stood, and said, . . . If I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house." (Luke xix. 8, 9.)

"Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." (2 Cor. vii. 10.)

"The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." (Ps. li. 17.)

"The Lord is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart; and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit." (Ps. xxxiv. 18.)

"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." (Ps. lxvi. 18.)

"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." (Isa. lv. 7.)

"As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" (Ezek. xxxiii. 11.)

Repentance that is "unto salvation" must be not only "of sin but *toward God.* When a man undertakes to repent toward his fellow-man, it is repenting straight up a precipice; when he repents toward the law, it is repenting in the crocodile's jaw; when he repents toward public sentiment, it is throwing himself into a thicket of brambles and thorns; but when he repents toward God, he repents toward all love and mercy. God receives the penitent soul as the sea receives the bather, to return it again purer and whiter than he took it.—*Beecher.*

Many persons who appear to repent are like sailors who throw their goods overboard in a storm and wish for them again in a calm. He alone who is as careful to perform when health returns as he was to promise when death threatened, may know that his repentance is genuine. Many think not of living any holier, until they can live no longer. Many men mourn for the evil which sin brings, rather than for the sin which brings the evil. Remorse is not repentance. It was remorse, not repentance, that led Saul to say: "I have sinned." David, the true penitent, said: "I have sinned *against the Lord.*" Pharaoh prayed: "Take away the plague." David prayed: "Pardon mine iniquity; take away my guilt." Worldly sorrow seeks to escape punishment; godly sorrow, to escape the cause of it.

A Jewish rabbi exhorted his disciples to repent the day before they died. "But," replied one, "the day of man's death is uncertain." "True," said the rabbi, "therefore repent every day, and you will be sure to repent the day before you die." He that defers his repentance may know that he will have one day more to repent for, and one day less to repent in. But he that repents every day for the sins of every day, when he comes to die will have but the sin of one day to repent of. True repentance is never too late, but late repentance is seldom true. Woe be unto him whose sin and life end together. There is one case of deathbed repentance recorded in the Bible, that no one should despair; and only one, that no one should presume.—*Selected.*

IX.

REPENTANCE.

"A MAN'S conversion," says Dr. Lovick Pierce, "is never deeper than his conviction. Saving faith never outruns repentance. Show men their ruin and then their remedy. Do not press your salvation nostrums upon unawakened souls." These wise words show us why it is that conversion from sin is as a rule preceded by conviction of sin. Conviction of sin is a state of mind produced by the Holy Spirit which involves such spiritual unrest that a sinner cannot long endure it. He will end it either by turning away from sin and seeking salvation, or by turning away from such sacred thoughts and things as were used by the Spirit to produce conviction, and will try to drown the voice of conscience and of God by plunging more deeply into sin. If he adopts the first course, it will result in his conversion. The two conditions of personal salvation are repentance and faith, the former having reference to his attitude toward sin and the latter his attitude toward Christ.

Repentance Defined.—Repentance is that act of an awakened sinner by which, with sincere and godly sorrow on account of his sin, he resolves, God helping him, to forsake utterly and unconditionally all

sin, now, henceforth, and forever. To attain saving faith and personal salvation without renouncing all sin, or at least without a sincere purpose of so doing, is a moral impossibility. Repentance, therefore, is the first condition demanded of a sinner in order to his salvation. The word "repentance," in one form or another, appears one hundred and six times in the Bible. In thirty-seven instances it is used with reference to God and in sixty-nine instances with reference to man. The English word is the translation of two Greek words, (*metanœo*, or *metanoia*, and *metamelomai*.) The former is the word generally used in the New Testament, and it means a change of mind that is followed by a change of life. The latter word, which appears but a few times in the New Testament, is rendered by the word "regret" in the Revised Version. (See 2 Cor. vii. 8, 9.) Some writers regard repentance as the keynote of the kingdom which Christ came to establish, and the key to a proper understanding of New Testament theology. (See "The Great Meaning of Metanoia," by Treadwell Walden.)

Salvation Is from Sin, but Not in Sin.—The first effect of the gospel is to make man realize the danger and guilt and exceeding sinfulness of sin—not of sin generally, but of his own sin—and so to realize it that he will loathe, abhor, and forsake it. A sinner who is so overpowered and prostrated by the sense of his own guilt and sin as to feel that it is

impossible for God to save him may be, and generally is, very near to salvation. On the other hand, a self-righteous sinner, who thinks lightly of sin, and feels that it is no serious obstacle in the way of his salvation, who feels that it is of such small consequence that God can and possibly will save him without his resolving to renounce all sin—such a one is at the farthest possible distance from salvation. An awakened and partially penitent sinner sometimes expresses himself thus: "I am resolved to give up sin conditionally—that is, if God will first save me, I promise to give it up; but if he does not save me, then I will not give it up." If God were to save a man in view of such conditional repentance as this, he would be saving the sinner in his sin, rather than from sin, and the sinner might then reason that, as he had been saved in the first instance in his sin, he might remain a saved man, and yet continue in sin. For a man to feel that he cannot give up sin without the gracious aid of the Holy Spirit, and that he cannot live without sin unless he experiences personal salvation, is quite accordant with the teachings of the Scriptures. This healthful, penitential state of mind is not to be confused with that of which we here speak, in which the resolution to give up sin is accompanied by a certain mental reservation which betrays a lingering love for sin and desire to continue in it. This repentance is not genuine, it is not com-

plete, it can never result in salvation. True, evangelical repentance renounces sin unconditionally. "Put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ," said the apostle, "and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfill the lusts thereof."

The Elements of Repentance.—Genuine repentance, then, we may say, consists of five elements: (1) sorrow for sin, (2) a resolution to forsake all sin, (3) amendment, (4) reparation, and (5) confession. The first two are internal; of their genuineness only God can judge. The last three are external, and therefore furnish marks by which the world can judge of the sincerity and genuineness of the penitence.

Godly Sorrow and Worldly Sorrow Distinguished.—Sorrow for sin may be either "godly sorrow" or "worldly sorrow." "Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." (2 Cor. vii. 10.) Of these two kinds of sorrow we find striking examples in the repentance respectively of Peter and Judas. "Worldly sorrow" for sin has reference simply to the world, and may be brought about by detection, exposure, disgrace, threatened punishment. If the humiliation and punishment be great, the sorrow is great; if they be slight, the sorrow is slight. It is a sorrow which dreads the temporal consequences of the sin, rather than hates the sin itself. "Godly sorrow," on the other hand, has reference to God and

the moral turpitude of sin. It is born of an awakened conscience which owns its guilt, abhors its sin because it separates from God, and dreads the moral and eternal consequences of sin. It is that contrition and utter broken-heartedness experienced by one who, though convinced that he is a guilty sinner, yet hates sin and loves righteousness and longs for holiness. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise," was the plea of the penitent psalmist. (Ps. li. 17.)

Forsaking Sin the Essence of Repentance.—But sorrow for sin is not enough; if it is sincere and "godly," it will result in a resolution to renounce and forsake all sin. This resolution is not lightly nor easily formed. It is a very common thing for an awakened and penitent sinner to try to hold on to some sins and yet be saved; but even one sin, if clung to, will make it impossible for God to save. One small leak may sink the largest ship; one sin, persistently indulged in, may so fill the soul with sin as to sink it to the lowest depths of perdition. But sins are rarely, if ever, found singly and alone in the human heart. The fruits of the carnal mind are manifold. "The ax is laid at the root of the tree," said the great preacher of repentance. True repentance does not begin by lopping off the branches one at a time, but lays the ax at the root of the tree of sin. Down with

the whole tree; away with all sin! We can never be saved from all our sins by repenting of and giving up one sin at a time; they must all go, and go together, and go at once. That is the spirit of genuine "repentance toward God." True repentance, again, makes no compromise or covenant with sin. The true penitent turns his back on sin, "crosses the bridge, and burns the bridge behind him;" he leaves no way open, in mind or heart or purpose, for a return to sin. "If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me." "The sacrifices of the wicked are an abomination unto the Lord." The penitent sinner who, with full purpose and resolution, has forsaken all sin, or is sincerely and earnestly trying so to do, has a right to pray, and to expect an answer to his prayers. But the sinner who is habitually indulging in what he knows to be sinful, and who is not sincerely and earnestly striving to get rid of sin, that man's praying is vain, "an abomination" to God.

Amendment a Necessary Element in Genuine Repentance.—If the resolution to forsake all sin springs from godly sorrow, and is sincere and heartfelt, it will show itself at once by amendment, an utter abandonment of all sin, a forsaking of evil habits of all kinds, an entire change of life so far as the previous life has been sinful. If the penitent has previously wronged any man, he now makes haste to ask for-

giveness for the wrong. If he has defrauded his neighbor, he makes speedy restoration of what he has dishonestly acquired, so far as he is able. We have known a penitent to arise from the altar, take his hat, and rush out of the church; only to return, however, a few minutes later, his countenance lighted up with a sense not only of human but of divine forgiveness. He had given proof of the genuineness of his repentance by going *at once* to a neighbor living near the church, and seeking forgiveness for a wrong he had done him. Another penitent, when convicted of sin by the Holy Spirit, made haste to send a large sum of money to one whom he had defrauded. It is needless to add that he was soundly converted, and made a most useful and exemplary member of the Church. The penitent Zaccheus said, "If I have wrongfully exacted aught of any man, I restore fourfold;" and Jesus then said, "This day is salvation come to this house." Not always are circumstances such that human forgiveness may be sought or restoration be made at once, but the spirit that prompts to amendment and restoration must be present, even though the opportunity therefor be lacking.

Reparation the Best Evidence of Repentance.—This element of repentance cannot be too strongly emphasized. To make reparation for wrong done is the best possible proof of the sincerity and genuine-

ness of repentance. In the Jewish law it is said: "When a man or woman shall commit any sin that men commit, or do a trespass against the Lord, and that person be guilty; then they shall confess their sin which they have done: and he shall recompense his trespass with the principal thereof, and add unto it the fifth part thereof, and give it unto him against whom he hath trespassed. But if the man have no kinsman to recompense the trespass unto, let the tresspass be recompensed unto the Lord, even unto the priest." Dr. Adam Clarke, in commenting on a certain passage in Genesis, says: "No man should expect mercy at the hand of God who, having wronged his neighbor, refuses, when he has it in his power, to make the restitution. Were he to weep tears of blood, both the justice and mercy of God would shut out his prayers if he make not his neighbor amends for the injury he has done him." An actual example will prove more effectually than words and arguments can the value of reparation in evidencing the genuineness of repentance: "Peccator wounded the reputation of his neighbor Hermis, and on another occasion defrauded him of ten pounds. Some of the neighborhood were apprised that he had done both. Peccator was converted under the preaching of Paulinus, and, on giving a relation of his sorrow for his sins, spoke of the depth of his convictions and his abhorrence of his

trangressions. He was received into the congregation, and sat down with the faithful to commemorate the great sin offering. Hermis and his neighbors were witnesses of all this. They saw that Peccator was penitent and much reformed in his behavior, but they could not believe him sincere because he made no restitution. They regarded him either as a hypocrite or self-deceived, because, having it in his power, he repaid not the ten pounds, nor once contradicted the slanders he had propagated. Peccator, however, felt little enjoyment in his profession, and soon fell back into his former habits. He became again penitent, and, on examining the grounds of his falling off, discovered that he had never cordially turned away from his sins. Overwhelmed in his sorrow for the past, he resolved on giving himself up to the Lord; and, reflecting on his past life, set about the work of reformation in earnest. He called on Hermis, paid him his ten pounds and the interest for every day that he had kept it back; went to all the persons to whom he had slandered him, told them what an injustice he had done him, and begged them, if they had told it to any other persons, to contradict it. Several other persons whom he had wronged in his dealings with them, he also visited, and fully redressed all these wrongs against his neighbors. He also confessed them to the Lord, and asked him to forgive him. Peccator was then

restored to the Church, and, better still, he enjoyed a peace of mind and a confidence in God that was a continual feast. His example, moreover, did much to enlarge the congregation in the community where he lived and to inspire people with confidence in the power and reality of the Christian religion. This was, unequivocally, a case of sincere repentance."

Confession of Sin an Evidence of Repentance.—Genuine repentance, again, will show itself in making confession of sin. This is, first of all, private and to God. But the seeker of salvation who is unwilling to make public confession of his sin and of his purpose to lead a Christian life is not yet ready for salvation; his repentance is not yet complete. If this unwillingness to make public confession be due to moral cowardice, it is impossible that God can save him until he does confess. The man who has sinned before the world must, before the world, come out from sin and show to his former companions in sin that he is done with sin. This may be hard to do; he may be ashamed to let his companions see him seek the salvation of his soul; but he must, by God's help, win the victory over this cowardice and shame, or he can never be saved; indeed, unless he does this, he is not worth saving, for he would not keep his religion if he were saved. The mode of making a public confession of sin is unimportant; whether by rising, or kneeling, or raising the hand, or going

to the altar, or going to an inquiry room, matters but little, but it is all-important that confession be made in some way. For our part, we have never found any better method than coming forward and kneeling at the altar for prayer and instruction. An agonizing hour or two at the penitential altar has proved to untold thousands of sin-burdened and penitent souls the very gate of heaven, the threshold to a bright and joyous conversion. We should not make public confession needlessly hard; but there is perhaps a greater danger in our day of making it so easy that it costs little or no effort on the part of the sinner, and makes little impression on his mind and heart. Godly sorrow, penitence, and confession are not light and easy exercises of soul to a sinner; they were never meant to be such, but are designed to stir up all the manhood that there is in the sinner, and move him to the very depths of his soul.

The Value of a Deep Repentance.—Only when this preliminary work of grace is deep and heartfelt and radical will the conversion that follows it be deep and radical and soul-saving. The problem with us is not to get sinners to stand up and be counted into the visible Church; but it is to get them to realize the guilt and ruin of sin, to repent and forsake sin, and to be saved from sin. No greater wrong can perhaps be done a sinner than to rush him into the Church with no adequate ideas of sin, and no

experience of repentance and salvation. Of course to make public confession of sin does not mean that a sinner is to mention in detail the various sins of which he has been guilty; this is not only not necessary, but in many cases would be inappropriate, or even positively hurtful. It simply means that he must in some public way befitting the occasion, either by act or by word, show to the world that he renounces sin and intends to lead a new life.

Legal and Evangelical Repentance Distinguished.—It used to be common for theologians to treat repentance as legal and evangelical. Legal repentance was defined as that "regret and reluctance that arise in a person after having done something that he ought not to have done. When Judas saw that Christ was condemned, it is said of him that he repented of what he had done. (Matt. xxvii. 3.) He was mightily afflicted in his mind about it, and wished that it had not been done. But this repentance arises from a fear of the punishment denounced against him, and is not accompanied with hatred of sin; as when a malefactor suffers for his crimes, he reflects upon his actions with sorrow; but this, not being a sacred act but proceeding from a selfish principle, is consistent with as great a love to sin as he had before, and may be entirely terminated upon himself. He may be sorry for his crimes, as they have exposed him to punishment, and yet not be grieved that thereby he

has offended God." Evangelical repentance is "that saving grace wrought in the soul by the Spirit of God, whereby a sinner is made to see and be sensible of his sin, is grieved and humbled before God on account of it, not so much for the punishment to which his sin has made him liable, as that thereby God is dishonored and offended, his laws violated, and his own soul polluted and defiled; and this grief arises from love to God, and is accompanied with a hatred of sin, a love for holiness, and a fixed resolution to forsake sin, and an expectation of favor and forgiveness through the merits of Christ." These two kinds of repentance are practically what we have elsewhere defined as worldly and godly sorrow.

The Repentance of God Explained.—"The sacred writers of the Old and New Testaments often represent God as moved with regret, or repentance, or relenting, for having suffered or resolved upon certain things. It is said that God repented that he had made man, seeing that his wickedness had proceeded to such an extremity. (Gen. vi. 6.) It is elsewhere said that he repented of having made Saul king over his people. (1 Sam. xv. 11.) This is not to be understood as if God had conceived any regret at anything he had done wrong, or that he repented of a false step he had made, as a man does when he perceives he has committed an error. God is not capable of repentance in this sense. But sometimes he

changes his conduct toward those who are unfaithful to him, and, after having treated them with mercy, he corrects them with severity, as if he had repented of what he had before done in their favor. Also God is said to repent of the evil he was about to inflict, when, moved with compassion toward the miserable, or, entreated by their prayers, he remits the punishment of their sins, or does not execute the threatenings he made against them: thus it is said in the Psalms that he repented according to the multitude of his mercies. (Ps. cvi. 45; see also Jer. xviii. 8.)" This manner of speaking of God, representing him as repenting, is what is known in theology as anthropomorphism—that is, speaking of God as if he were a man. Strictly speaking, there is no change that takes place in God; his feelings and attitude toward sin and sinners remain uniformly the same. He hates and condemns sin, and this constantly and uniformly; but men he can be said to hate and condemn only in so far as they are sinners and abide in sin. When a man, moving out of and away from sin and into righteousness and goodness, passes from under the divine condemnation and into the divine favor, and recognizes that God no longer hates him but now loves him, he speaks of what has occurred as if a change had taken place in God, when in fact the only moral change that has taken place is in himself. We speak of the sun and say it is shining

now, and then again that it is not shining now; we say it rises and sets, as if it were the sun that did the changing, whereas the sun never changes; the changes that shut out the light of the sun all belong to our earth and its atmosphere, and in no sense to the sun. In a similar manner the sacred writers of old spoke of God as if he changed and repented; but a close analysis of what took place will show that the only real moral change that took place was in men and not in God. The sunshine of God's love and favor is always beaming upon the land of innocence, virtue, and righteousness; but there is another land where the dark clouds of sin shut off that light and love, and even turn it into condemnation and wrath. When a man passes from this land to that, from a life of sin to a life of righteousness, he represents God as repenting, as changing his feelings toward him and his dealings with him. But it is not so; the only real repentance and moral change that has taken place is in man.

Deathbed Repentance.—Deathbed repentances should not be encouraged beforehand, or discouraged when this is all that is left to a dying sinner. Most of those who are restored to health after making such repentances soon forget their vows and return to their former sinful habits, which would indicate that few deathbed repentances are genuine and saving. If it be our privilege to point the dying sinner to the

penitent thief who was saved by Christ on the cross, to show him that it is possible for a sinner to be saved even at death's door, it is also our duty to warn every living sinner of the thousands who, like the other thief, have died as they lived—impenitent, without God, and without hope. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

Divine Encouragements to Repentance.—The Bible abounds in exhortations and encouragements to repentance. Then "let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." (Isa. lv. 7.) "As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" (Ezek. xxxiii. 11.) 'Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish," said our Lord, and they are words of fearful import; but he also said, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance;" and he is "not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

A PRAYER FOR REPENTANCE.

O that I could repent!
O that I could believe!
Thou, by thy voice omnipotent,
The rock in sunder cleave.
Thou, by thy two-edged sword,
My soul and spirit part;
Strike with the hammer of thy word,
And break my stubborn heart.

Saviour, and Prince of peace,
The double grace bestow;
Unloose the bands of wickedness,
And let the captive go.
Grant me my sins to feel,
And then the load remove;
Wound, and pour in, my wounds to heal,
The balm of pard'ning love.

This is thy will I know,
That I should holy be;
Should let my sins this moment go,
This moment turn to thee.
O might I now embrace
Thy all-sufficient power!
And nevermore to sin give place,
And never grieve thee more!

Charles Wesley.

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X.

SAVING FAITH.

"He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Heb. xi. 6.)

"These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." (John xx. 31.)

"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. x. 9, 10, 17.)

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." (Acts xvi. 31.)

"By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God." (Eph. ii. 8.)

"If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth." "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark ix. 23; xvi. 16.)

"That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." (1 Cor. ii. 5.)

Repentance is Faith's usher, and bedews all her way with tears. Repentance reads the law and weeps; Faith reads the gospel and takes comfort. . Repentance looks on the frowning brow of Moses as he descends from Sinai with the broken decalogue in his hand; Faith looks on Christ as he ascends Calvary bearing the cross on which he is to be crucified for the world's redemption.

Faith has its roots in a moral revolution called repentance. The English word "repentance," as well as the Greek which it translates, means after thought or reconsideration. But when the subjects on which this reconsideration is to be expended are taken into account, it becomes apparent that this is not simply a mental view of the situation. It means the recognition with sorrow and shame of the wickedness and hopelessness of existing relations; but over against that, preventing a resultant despair, it sets the welcome tidings of God's coming reconstruction of humanity, and it issues in a resolve to venture all upon what Romanes calls "the experiment of faith."—*R. J. Drummond.*

To possess authority, a man must have a clearly defined creed. He must know what he believes, and believe it with his whole soul. His Christian feeling may be broad in its sympathies and free from bigotry, but his doctrine must be a clear, deep stream flowing between its solid banks, else it will become a swamp or a morass. The expansive lake avails nothing to generate electric power; but how different when its water flows through the close and rock-ribbed banks of Niagara!—*J. Spencer Kennard.*

Faith in Christ is, first of all, this: Such as he was, I want to be; his is the kind of life I want to live; his is the kind of character I want to possess; his is the kind of blessedness I desire for myself. A man may believe what creed he will, but if this is not in his heart, he has not faith in Christ.—*Lyman Abbott.*

X.

SAVING FAITH.

A DISTINGUISHED divine has said: "We should not waste time in explaining what does not need explanation. A conspicuous instance is the nature of faith. Men frequently complain that they do not understand what it is to believe. But the complaint is in many cases a mere excuse for rejection or delay, and the real difficulty in all such cases is a lack of disposition to believe. Elaborate explanations do not lessen this indisposition, and may even embarrass the anxious inquirer with the notion that there is something very mysterious and difficult about faith, when it is in fact so simple as not to admit of being explained. Our main duty is to tell the people *what* to believe and *why* to believe, not *how* to believe."

Explaining the Nature of Faith.—There is much of truth in the foregoing statement, and yet we are persuaded that many inquiring sinners who profess to have difficulty in understanding what saving faith is are sincere and honest, nor is their vague and imperfect knowledge to be attributed so much to the needless and confusing efforts of others to explain the nature of faith as to the absence of all explanations whatsoever. "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing

by the word of God." We must not only explain what to believe, but also what it is to believe. "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe;" and Jesus, "the author and finisher of our faith," in his last commission has given his preachers their theme: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned." St. John's final statement as to his own Gospel is equally true if applied to all the New Testament records: "These are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." He who would explain to others this most vital and important doctrine of the Christian religion should have both an intellectual and an experimental knowledge of saving faith; and they who would have others explain to them the nature of faith must also understand at the outset that it is a matter of the heart as well as of the head, and that no rational explanation, however clear and complete it may be to the intellect, can in itself alone lead to salvation. The conditions of saving faith are moral as well as intellectual. But while this is true, we should not therefore conclude that it is not incumbent upon us to give a rational explanation of faith, and that it is a matter of indifference whether its nature and intellectual contents are understood by peni-

tents or not. "According to your faith, so be it unto you," is a statement which means that faith is the measure of the man.

The Relation of Faith to Reason.—Faith as a rational act may be defined, in its simplest form, as *belief upon evidence.* Belief without evidence is credulity, not faith. We are not only not required to believe without evidence, in order to be saved, but the Christian religion does not recognize credulity, or mere blind faith without evidence, as any worthy or true faith at all. God has endowed us not only with a faith-faculty, but with reason as well, and there can be no intelligent and saving belief in the gospel unless both of these faculties are exercised. It is the office of reason to judge of evidence; it is the office of faith to believe upon evidence. The kind of evidence required in order to a proper exercise of faith depends, of course, entirely upon the nature of the thing believed. Historical truth must be supported by historical evidence, moral truth by moral evidence, intuitive truth by intuitive evidence, spiritual truth by spiritual evidence, supernatural truth by supernatural evidence. Because Christianity does not furnish physical demonstration or sensuous evidence to purely moral and spiritual truth is no ground for affirming that the Christian religion demands that we believe without evidence. To accept a truth upon the accredited testimony of inspired writers, or upon the

testimony of the divine Spirit to the human spirit, is surely not believing without evidence. A truth may transcend reason without contradicting reason, and many truths taught in the Bible are of this kind. To refuse to believe a spiritual truth because it transcends reason, because we cannot understand how it is, is the essence of rationalism; nor do rationalists apply this irrational principle to anything but religious and spiritual truths. On the other hand, to accept in religion things which are entirely without evidence, or perchance even contradicted by reason, is superstitious credulity, and this finds no place in the Christian religion.

The Relation of Faith to Repentance.—The question of the Philippian jailer, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" will continue to be asked by awakened sinners as long as the gospel is preached, and the answer then given by the inspired apostle will ever be the same: "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." This passage of Scripture might be interpreted as implying that faith is the one and only condition of salvation, as also Acts x. 43: "Whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins," and another passage which declares that faith is counted for righteousness. (Rom. iv. 3-5.) Other passages, if read alone, might be interpreted as implying that repentance is the only condition of salvation. Thus Acts iii. 19: "Repent

ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." Both John the Baptist and Jesus are represented as preaching and saying, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," as if this were a complete gospel. In Mark vi. 12 we read that the apostles "went out, and preached that men should repent," as if this were the only condition they demanded in order to salvation. Luke's form of the final apostolic commission is, "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations." (xxiv. 47.) Yet other passages represent both repentance and faith as together constituting the twofold condition of salvation. Thus Christ is represented by St. Mark as preaching and saying, "Repent ye, and believe the gospel;" and the gospel is nothing less than the good news of salvation through him. We know that repentance was not the only gospel proclaimed by John the Baptist. Not only did he say to all, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world;" but St. Paul tells us that "John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." (Acts xix. 4.) There is no contradiction in these different statements. No penitent will ever, or can ever, effectually give up all sin except he have some faith in Jesus Christ. That abhorrence of sin and turning away from sin

which gives to the act of repentance a saving significance, can be the act of a believing penitent only. Hence repentance, when named alone as the condition of personal salvation, always implies faith on the part of the penitent. On the other hand, faith that is "unto salvation" must be preceded by repentance, and this is always implied whenever faith alone is mentioned as the condition of salvation. If genuine repentance can be the act of none but a believing penitent, so saving faith can be exercised by none but a penitent believer.

The Relation of Saving Faith to Christ.—Not all faith is saving faith. In many forms of faith there is no moral character whatever involved. Thus it is necessary to believe in God and his fidelity. "He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him," but a mere intellectual belief in God's existence and fidelity is not in itself saving faith. Christ said: "I am the door: *by me if any man enter in*, he shall be saved," and he is "able to save them to the uttermost *that come unto God by him.*" "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved" is perhaps a summary of all that is said in the New Testament concerning the relation of faith to Christ and personal salvation. There are many things that may or may not be connected with faith, but there is one thing that the New Testament always connects with it, either

explicitly or impliedly, and that is Christ. By saving faith, therefore, is here meant nothing more nor less than that faith in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, and that acceptance of him as a personal Saviour, which is everywhere in the New Testament represented as the one supreme and indispensable condition of salvation. We desire now to inquire more particularly as to what it is in the person and work of Christ that is presented as the specific object of saving faith.

The Specific Object of Saving Faith.—The object of Christian faith generally is the Holy Scriptures; but the specific object of saving faith is Jesus Christ, whose divinity, atoning death, and resurrection are especially emphasized in the New Testament whenever faith in Christ is represented as the condition of salvation. That belief in the divinity of Christ is an essential element of saving faith is plainly taught in numerous passages of the New Testament: "These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." (John xx. 31.) "And Phillip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." (Acts viii. 37.) "He that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only-begotten Son of God." (John iii. 18.) Again, the eye

of the penitent who believes unto the saving of his soul must gaze upon a suffering and crucified Saviour: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." "Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood," without the shedding of which there could be no remission of sins. Belief in the resurrection of Christ also enters into saving faith: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." (Rom. x. 9.) "Jesus, the Son of God," "Jesus, and him crucified," "Jesus and the resurrection"—these are the truths emphasized in presenting Christ as the object of saving faith.

The Faith of Trust Distinguished from the Faith of Assent. There are two kinds of faith which need to be distinguished: the faith of assent and the faith of trust. The former is with the mind or intellect simply; it assents to the truth of the Bible generally, without personally accepting Jesus Christ as a Saviour, or even repenting of and forsaking sin, and hence is in no way saving. The latter is with the heart and will as well as with the intellect; it is the faith of consent, and not of assent merely; it is a living, vital union to Christ, as of a branch to the vine, that brings forth fruit unto righteousness and

salvation. The former often assents to the truth of Christianity more because it is the prevailing faith of the multitude around than because of any real personal conviction of its truth. The latter is based on personal experience; and, instead of believing in Christ and the Bible because people generally believe thus, it would believe though all others should deny. Of merely intellectual faith, it is said: "Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well; the devils also believe, and tremble." Of the faith of trust, it is said: "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." It is a "faith which works by love," and "he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." Of Simon Magus it is said that he "believed," and yet he had "neither part nor lot in the matter," but was in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity; of others we read that they "believed unto the saving of the soul." A man who has simply the faith of assent is still reckoned as an "unbeliever," for this faith makes no change in his life and character. But all who with the faith of trust accept Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour renounce all sin, and are transformed in character, being justified and regenerated.

The Psychology of Saving Faith.—It follows from the foregoing distinction between the faith of assent and the faith of trust that the mind, the heart, and

the will are all exercised in the act of saving faith. Every act of saving faith involves a belief of the mind, a trust of the heart, and a decision of the will. A certain knowledge of Christ and faith in him are absolutely necessary as the intellectual basis of all true faith. (Rom. x. 13, 14.) But it is the loving trust of the heart in the promises of Christ, "who loved us and gave himself for us," which alone will enable the penitent sinner to "draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith;" and lead him to put forth that supreme volition of the soul by which he renounces all other hope of salvation, and takes Jesus Christ and him only as his Saviour, now, henceforth, and forever. On one occasion a certain man came to Jesus, saying: "If thou canst do anything, have compassion on us." And Jesus said unto him: "If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth"—that is, "it is not if I can do, but rather if thou wilt believe; not upon my power, but upon thy faith it turns." "And straightway the father of the child cried out, and said with tears, Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." In purely intellectual belief there is no moral character whatever; it is because the heart and will enter thus into saving faith that it has moral character and involves moral responsibility. Unbelief that is due to inadequate evidence is purely intellectual and cannot be a sin. But unbelief that manifests itself in hatred to

Christ and that which he stands for in character and ethics, and in a willful rejection of him and refusal to submit to his authority, is a sin. The exceeding sinfulness of unbelief is intensified by the fact that the Holy Spirit aids man in exercising faith. But for this, unbelief might not involve guilt.

The Divine and Human Elements in Saving Faith Distinguished.—Saving faith can be attained only by the help of the Holy Spirit, and the ability to believe is the gracious gift of God. "By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." When Peter made his memorable confession of faith recorded in the sixteenth chapter of Matthew's Gospel—"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God"—our Lord replied: "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." These passages teach us that faith is of God; but that the determining cause of faith is in the free will of man is abundantly shown by numerous other passages of Scripture: "According to your faith be it unto you;" "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace;" "Be it unto thee even as thou wilt;" "If thou wouldst believe, thou shouldst see the glory of God;" "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved;" "He that believeth not shall be damned." Nothing is more plainly taught in the Bible than that we are responsible for our faith or want of faith. While belief and unbelief in things

purely intellectual may be a simple matter of evidence, and hence not a matter for the will to decide, this is not the fact with regard to saving faith. The divinity and incarnation of Christ, his vicarious death and resurrection, are facts which are open to investigation, and are to be believed on the testimony of trustworthy witnesses and records (which inspiration has not failed to provide); but these and other like cardinal questions being once settled, the acceptance or rejection of Jesus Christ as a personal Saviour is a question to be decided by the free moral agent. This is why unbelief is regarded in the New Testament as a sin. "When the Holy Ghost is come," said Christ, "he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: of sin, because they believe not on me." The unawakened and impenitent sinner will not recognize the sinfulness of his unbelief, and the reason why many who seek salvation by faith seem to fail is because they are not fully resolved to give up all sin. But the truly awakened and genuinely penitent soul realizes deeply the sin of that unbelief which has led him hitherto to reject a Saviour's love. His prayer is, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." To every such one the Scripture says: "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that is, the word of faith, which we preach." (Rom. x. 8.) Thus is faith of God, also of man."

Saving Faith and Its Effects Defined.—Saving faith has been defined as a "sure trust and confidence which a man hath in God, that by the merits of Christ his sins are forgiven, and he is reconciled to the favor of God; whereof doth follow a loving heart to obey his commandments. This faith purifies the heart (by the power of God who dwelleth therein) from pride, anger, desire, from all unrighteousness, from all filthiness of flesh and spirit; and fills it with a love stronger than death, both to God and to all mankind; a love that doeth the works of God, glorying to spend and be spent for all men, and that endureth with joy, not only the reproach of Christ, the being mocked, despised, and hated of all men, but whatsoever the wisdom of God permits the malice of men or devils to inflict. Whosoever hath this faith, thus working by love, is not almost only but altogether a Christian." *

The Vow of Repentance and Faith.—The vow of repentance and faith, which are the conditions of personal salvation, may be stated as follows: "I do sincerely repent of all my sins, and promise, God helping me, to forsake all sin. I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and, trusting in the divine promise of salvation through his atoning death, I accept him as my Saviour, and promise to follow his

*See sermon on "The Almost Christian," by John Wesley, 1741.

example and obey his precepts." This vow every awakened sinner can take. Will he take it, and take it now? This is the question that needs to be pressed upon him for speedy answer. When he answers it affirmatively, we have a right to conclude that he has saving faith, and that God for Christ's sake now saves him. This is all. Nothing for the present about the doctrine of the Trinity, Church creeds, and all their many articles of faith. Nothing about the further office of saving faith in developing Christian character and working out one's final salvation that is to be revealed at the last day. Church creeds have their place, and good works must come as the fruit of faith, and Christian character must be developed as the end and crown of faith. But for the present it is simply a question of taking Jesus Christ as a Saviour from all sin and a Pattern of all holiness.

A Divine Person, and Not a Religious Creed, the Object of Saving Faith.—It will be seen from the foregoing statements that it is faith in a divine Person, and not faith in a Church creed, that is the condition of salvation. Church creeds are important, and, in so far as they are true and clear statements of the great cardinal doctrines of Christianity as taught in the Bible and confirmed by human reason and Christian experience, they will always be mighty agencies in bringing men to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ. But a creed may become a dead formula—a

symbol and substitute for what one really believes rather than a true and living expression of his personal faith. It is then credulity rather than real faith; and credulity is, as we have seen, belief without evidence. That means calling some other man's faith yours; it means that you do not know what you believe or why you believe. But personal faith is belief upon evidence. That means that, while respecting the opinions of others, you do your own thinking; that you know what you believe and why you believe. A man once joined the Roman Catholic Church, assigning as his reason for so doing that "it saved him the trouble of thinking;" by assenting to the Church creed the Church assumed all responsibility for the correctness and saving efficacy of his faith, and did his thinking for him. But it is to be feared that some Protestants are no better believers, and make their Church creed a substitute for a real, living, intelligent faith of their own, rather than an expression of it, thoughtfully accepted. Such a belief as that is a blind faith, and never yet developed Christian character or inspired a great and noble life. Mere assent to a creed, however evangelical and orthodox the creed may be, is not faith. There is more faith in honest doubt than in such subscription as this to creeds. The creed that saves the soul and makes character must be an intelligent personal faith in vital truth and in a living Person, not a substitute

for faith to save the believer the trouble of thinking for himself.

The Relation of Faith to Character.—"It makes no difference what a man believes, provided his life is right," is a sentence we often hear upon the lips of a certain class of men who are given to minifying faith in magnifying conduct and character. "What a man *does*, not what he *believes*," say they, "is the test by which we are to try him. Character, not creed, is what determines the man." Now there is just enough of truth in this statement to make it a misleading and dangerous error. With a show of truth on the surface, it is at heart radically false. It seems to imply that a high ideal of character is equally attainable under any type of faith, or possibly without any faith at all. But it makes all possible difference what a man believes. Faith, rightly defined, is the foundation of character, and right-doing is the result of right-thinking and right-believing. The man who does not believe in the Bible, in God, in Jesus Christ, in the divine authority of the moral law, in rewards and punishments in a future life—it is utterly impossible that he should be in conduct and character what that man will be who believes in all these things. The great and saintly men of the earth have all been great believers, and their moral greatness is directly traceable to their faith. It was the great faith of Abraham that made him the father of

the faithful for all time and the founder of a race the most noted for its moral character and achievements of all the ancient nations. It was the faith of Joseph that made him choose purity and a dungeon rather than guilt and freedom, and that made his name an undying synonym of innocence and virtue. It was the faith of Moses that was the secret of his life work and character, that made him the deliverer of his race and the legislator of the nations. It was the faith of Daniel that made him the noblest example of courage and fidelity, and one of the greatest prime ministers the world has ever seen. It was the faith of Paul that inspired his life work and made him the grandest missionary that ever carried the gospel to the nations of the earth. It was the faith of "the fishermen of Galilee" that made them "turn the world upside down." It was the faith of Martin Luther that made the mighty reformer of the sixteenth century and saved the Christian Church from the superstitions and immoralities that threatened its very life. It was the faith of John Wesley that made him to be not only one of the humblest of disciples but the greatest preacher and reformer of modern times, and enabled him, amid persecutions and oppositions, to inaugurate a work that to-day seems destined to envelop the whole earth with its doctrines of free grace and full salvation. The inspiration of every great man's work is his faith.

Christian Character the Crown of Faith.—A man without a faith is a man without character. A man with a bad faith is a bad man in life, character, and influence. A man with a timid, weak, wavering half faith is a weakling among men, tossed about with every wind of doctrine. Faith in error leads to an erroneous life; faith in truth, to a true life; faith in virtue, to a holy life; faith in Christ and immortality, to a Christian life, to life eternal. It is this vital and causal relation which faith sustains to life and character which gives it its great importance in the Christian system and in the plan of salvation. Faith is not to be sought as an end in itself. It is to secure these results that faith exists. While it is true that we are justified by faith alone, it is none the less true that that faith by which we are justified is not alone, but is accompanied and followed by all the works of faith and the fruits of the Spirit which together constitute a noble character and a useful life. In the great day that shall try all hearts, it is these things, and not faith, that shall be inquired into. When the Christian religion ceases to prove its divine character by producing an exalted type of moral manhood; when men who profess to have faith cannot at the same time point to an exalted ethical character as proof of the genuineness of their profession, then there will no longer be any need to preach the faith once delivered to the saints.

THE EFFORT OF FAITH.

Approach, my soul, the mercy seat,
Where Jesus answers prayer;
There humbly fall before his feet,
For none can perish there.

Thy promise is my only plea;
With this I venture nigh.
Thou call'st the burdened soul to thee,
And such, O Lord, am I.

Bowed down beneath a load of sin,
By Satan sorely pressed,
By wars without, and fears within,
I come to thee for rest.

Be thou my shield and hiding place;
That, sheltered near thy side,
I may my fierce accuser face,
And tell him thou hast died.

O wondrous love, to bleed and die,
To bear the cross and shame,
That guilty sinners, such as I,
Might plead his gracious name!

"Poor tempest-tossèd soul, be still;
My promised grace receive:"
'Tis Jesus speaks—I must, I will,
I can, I do believe.

John Newton

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XI.

CONFESSING CHRIST.

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy." (Prov. xxviii. 13.)

"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. x. 32, 33.)

"If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom. x. 9, 10.)

"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." "Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God." (1 John i. 9; iv. 15.)

To confess Christ is to acknowledge him to be what he really is and declares himself to be: the Son of God and the Saviour of the world. It is not enough that we cherish the conviction in our hearts, or confess it to ourselves, or to God, or to friends who agree with us. It must be done publicly before men, whether friends or foes; amid good report and evil report; when it brings reproach and danger, as well as when it incurs no risk. It is not enough that men may infer from our conduct that we are Christians; we must audibly and openly declare it. But such confession must be genuinely sincere; for it is only when the outward act is a revelation of the heart that it has any value.—*Charles Hodge.*

To claim Christ as a Saviour is to proclaim self a sinner. This is a cross against which pride rallies, and which, meekly borne, lays pride in the dust. When Peter stood in the judgment hall and warmed himself, confession would not only have humbled but would have saved him. Confession is not only born of faith, but it also in turn strengthens faith. Like filial piety, it nourishes its parent. It is to faith like those braces which the juices of the stalk throw out for self-support.—*Bishop L. L. Hamline.*

The confession of Christ enjoined upon us in the Scriptures does not consist merely in a particular ceremony, or other single act, but denotes in general that we come out as his followers, and speak and act as his, under all circumstances and at all hazards. Many who have once publicly confessed Christ, and are numbered with his people, often fail to confess him afterwards in word or deed. It is, of course, possible that one should show bad judgment and bad taste in announcing himself a Christian where there is no occasion for it; but for every person who does this unseasonably, there are very many who shrink from such an avowal when it ought to be made, and still more fail to confess by the actions which speak louder than words.—*John A. Broadus.*

XI.

CONFESSING CHRIST.

Having treated repentance and faith separately and in their mutual relations to each other, we come now to a doctrine that seems to unite the two—confession. In one sense, as confession of sin, it may be treated as an element of repentance; in another sense, as confessing Christ, it may be treated as an element of saving faith. Although we have recognized the place of confession in each of these doctrines, we prefer to emphasize its importance in personal salvation by giving it further and more careful consideration.

Confessing Sin and Confessing Christ Distinguished.—The profession of religion involves two confessions: first, the confession of sin; secondly, confessing Christ. These two confessions may be distinguished, but are not to be separated; for in the realm of personal salvation no one ever confesses sin except he is seeking Christ as his Saviour, and no one ever sincerely and worthily confesses Christ who has not already made humble confession of sin. While personal religion is the life of God in the soul, a life divinely originated and divinely maintained, yet that life is lived in the world and not in a hermit's cell. It is not in secret and alone that man sins; it is before others and with

others that he sins. When, therefore, he would give up sin and turn to Christ, it is not only fitting but necessary that he should let the world know that he proposes to abandon a life of sin and to take Christ as his Saviour. He confesses sin that he may let all know that, while he has sinned, he is forever done with it; he confesses Christ that he may let all know that he believes in him as the Son of God and takes him as his Saviour from sin. It is this confession of Christ, preceded by the confession and abandonment of sin, that separates believers from the world and gives them their peculiar title as "the saints." The saints are those who are separated from the world and consecrated to God.

The Difficulty of Confessing Christ.—Confession is an infallible test of moral character. To those who are reared in Christian lands, where religion is generally held in great respect, and in Christian homes, where the Divine Being is daily worshiped, it may seem an easy matter to publicly confess Christ. But it is not always, or even generally, thus. Indeed, it is not the will of God that it should be a light and easy matter to confess sin or to confess Christ. The sinner who comes out and makes confession of sin when it is hard to do so, who confesses Christ under circumstances which demand resolute decision of character and moral courage, is much more apt to prove a brave and heroic disciple of Christ than when his public confes-

sion involves none of these sacrifices and severe tests. It is perhaps well that professing religion should cost the Christian disciple something of social persecution and derision from wicked companions and associates. It tends to make the disciple's severance from the world of sin and its temptations more complete, and to make of him a more pronounced and consecrated Christian. That the Christian religion should be popular with the world, and "joining the Church" fashionable, is a state of affairs fraught with serious peril and by no means to be desired. Ages of persecution for religion's sake, periods when it has cost much of criticism and derision from a sinful world to confess Christ, have been periods most noted for deep piety, Christian heroism, and aggressive work for Christ.

The Value of a Good Confession.—Christian character never shines forth more beautifully, nor exerts more influence for good, than when it exhibits courage and gentleness under derision. This is especially true of young Christians. It rarely ever fails that one who confesses sin and seeks Christ at the beginning of a revival of religion eventually makes a high and useful type of Christian. The backslidings which are so frequently a painful sequel to many popular revivals come generally from that class of converts who made a profession of religion only when it had become common, or even popular, for the time being, to do this. The young Christian who, upon leaving

his home, remains true to Christ, reads daily the sacred Book, and bows reverently in private prayer, will likely be derided therefor by godless companions. If he "plays the coward," and denies his Lord, he will soon be as they are; but if he has moral courage, and is true to Christ, his companions will not only profoundly respect his religion, but many of them will likely be so influenced by his example of fidelity to Christian duty as to confess Christ and lead Christian lives. A Christian lad, upon retiring the first night after he had entered school, in England, knelt for prayer as had been his custom in his cultured Christian home. His roommates and companions taunted him and hurled at him shoes, pillows, and other tangible articles in reach. A second night he knelt just as before, and still a few mocked him and endeavored to disturb his devotions. But when on the third night he knelt, he was suffered to pursue his devotions undisturbed; and soon he was joined by first one and then another of his roommates, until ere long they were all following his example. That lad became Dean Stanley. A Christian soldier, upon being ridiculed by his companions in camp because he bowed in prayer before retiring, determined the next night to pray in silence after he had retired; and he did so one night, but his conscience so smote him because of his moral cowardice that he returned to his usual form of devotion. His companions soon ceased to

ridicule him, and passed from respect for his religion to admiration and imitation of his example. No one can be a "secret Christian" and be true to his Lord. There is no attribute of Christian character that gives a disciple of Christ greater power for good than courage, moral courage, especially if it be accompanied by meekness and discretion. On the other hand, nothing so thoroughly robs a professing Christian of all influence and brings his religion into contempt as moral cowardice. That professing Christian alone who has courage to be true to Christ when it costs something is worthy to be considered a real Christian. Alexander the Great had in his army a soldier who bore his name, and, upon learning that he was a base coward, he summoned him to his presence and ordered him either to cease to be a coward or else to change his name. The professing Christian who is a moral coward must give up either his cowardice or all right to the name of Christian.

Moral Courage a Result as Well as a Condition of Personal Salvation.—But while it is true that he alone who has courage to confess Christ publicly, whatever the cost, will prove faithful to him, and he who lacks courage to confess Christ is wholly unworthy of bearing his name, we must not conclude that the moral coward is not worth saving. He is worth saving. Let the sinner who lacks moral courage become a subject of divine grace and be created anew in Christ Je-

sus, and he will have courage. Courage is one of the Christian virtues. He who, by nature and through sin, is a moral coward in the presence of derision or persecution may become by regeneration and through divine grace a very hero for courage. It was the glory of Napoleon, as a man of war, that he could take the apparently worthless vagabond and castaway of society, and even the condemned criminal, and so inspire him with his own valorous spirit that he would fight his battles with courage and heroism as if "to the manner born." So it is with Christ: however weak and timid by nature or through sin may be the soul that joins his ranks, the Spirit of his divine Master is at once imparted to him, and gives him courage equal to any emergency in life. Many of the noblest heroes of the cross were, until their natures were transformed by grace and their souls imbued with the Spirit of their Master, the helpless weaklings of sin, knowing what was right, but lacking the courage to do it. It is the high mission of our holy religion to impart courage to those who have it not. "Add to your faith courage."

Courage, Like Repentance and Faith, a Fruit of the Spirit. It may be said that it is inconsistent and contradictory thus to make moral courage at one and the same time a condition of salvation and a result of salvation. The contradiction is only apparent, and not real, for as a matter of fact this is true of well-

nigh all the fruits of the Spirit. Repentance is a condition of salvation, and yet who is so thoroughly penitent, who turns away from all sin with such abhorrence and godly sorrow, as one already fully saved from sin? Faith is a condition of salvation, and yet it is one of the fruits of the Spirit. Life is both a condition and a result of eating, acting, and thinking. The "gracious ability" with which all redeemed sinners are endowed makes possible the exercise of all those faculties and the fulfilling of all those conditions which are necessary to salvation; but the highest reach of the sinner's ability is to attain personal salvation, to fulfill the conditions of justification and regeneration. With that mighty transformation comes larger ability for the further and higher exercise of those virtues, like faith, love, and courage, which were possible in a lower degree before regeneration. All the good that is in unregenerate human nature is in a sense due to grace and a result of the atonement, but the good that is possible in the unregenerate state is exceedingly limited. It is only after the soul is united to God by a living and saving faith that it becomes possible to possess and exercise each and every virtue in the highest degree.

The Necessity of Confession.—The confession of Christ before men is declared in the Holy Scriptures to be essential to salvation. If one believes in Christ, and yet has not the courage to confess him, his faith

cannot save him. We read of such in the days of our Lord's earthly life: "Among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God." (John xii. 42, 43.) Nor is there much more hope of ultimate salvation when one professes to have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and yet refuses for other reasons than that of fear to publicly confess Christ and identify himself with the people of God. "Whosoever," said our Lord, "shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. x. 32, 33.) "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words, in this adulterous and sinful generation, of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." (Mark viii. 38.) Paul says: "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Rom. x. 9, 10.) "If we deny him, he also will deny us." (2 Tim. ii. 12.) There is, therefore, no condition of Christian disci-

pleship more clearly set forth in the Bible than this. If we do not confess Christ and acknowledge him as our Saviour, he will not confess us and acknowledge us as his disciples. If we are ashamed of him and unwilling to bear his reproach, if reproach there be in confessing him, then will he also be ashamed of us.

Confession the Condition of Forgiveness.—A king once invited a distinguished visitor to accompany him while he inspected the royal prison where many criminals were confined. As they entered the prison the king told the visitor that he would honor his visit that day by allowing him, after conversing with the prisoners, to select for pardon any one of them whom he might choose. The visitor asked each prisoner in turn to tell him something of the crime for which he had been imprisoned. But each one pleaded his entire innocence. All of them, it seemed, had been falsely accused and condemned. One said that a malicious enemy had had him tried and convicted. Another blamed the judge, another the jury, another the lawyers, another was the victim of a wicked conspiracy—all, it seemed, were innocent. At length, however, they came to a prisoner whose face showed penitence and remorse. "And why are you here?" asked the visitor. "I am here for my many crimes," said he. "I was justly accused and justly condemned. My punishment is no more than I deserve. I have sinned against God and man, and am reaping only the just

reward of my own evil deeds." "I will select this man for pardon," said the visitor to the king. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

The Mode of Confessing Christ.—We confess Christ by receiving Christian baptism, and by publicly joining the Church; and as members of the Church we continue to confess Christ by partaking of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper from time to time, according to Christ's holy institution and commandment. The sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper are the modes which Christ himself has appointed by which his disciples are to publicly confess him to the end of time. That young convert who thinks that he can be just as good out of the Church as in it, and who therefore refuses to publicly identify himself with some branch of the Christian Church, takes perilous risks with the salvation of his soul. We have rarely, if ever, known or heard of such a one holding out faithful to the end. The Christian believer needs to publicly confess Christ far more than Christ needs his confession. It is he who has made us and redeemed us, and who knows our needs, that has enjoined that we shall, not once simply but continually through life, publicly confess him and show forth his death until he comes again.

ASHAMED OF JESUS.

Jesus! and shall it ever be,
A mortal man ashamed of thee?
Scorned be the thought by rich and poor;
O may I scorn it more and more!

Ashamed of Jesus! sooner far
Let evening blush to own a star:
He sheds the beams of light divine
O'er this benighted soul of mine.

Ashamed of Jesus! just as soon
Let midnight be ashamed of noon:
'Tis midnight with my soul, till he,
Bright Morning Star, bid darkness flee!

Ashamed of Jesus! of that Friend
On whom, for heaven, my hopes depend;
It must not be—be this my shame,
That I no more revere his name.

Ashamed of Jesus! yes, I may,
When I've no sins to wash away;
No tear to wipe, no joy to crave,
No fears to quell, no soul to save.

Till then—nor is the boasting vain—
Till then I boast a Saviour slain;
And O may this my portion be,
That Saviour not ashamed of me!

Joseph Grigg

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[See references to preceding chapter. Most writers include "Confessing Christ" under "Saving Faith."]

XII.

JUSTIFICATION.

"Who can forgive sins but God only?" (Mark ii. 7.)

"Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. . . . To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin. . . . Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. iii. 24-v. 1.)

"Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." (Isa. lv. 7.)

"I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jer. xxxi. 34.)

Thinkest thou that God, who gave thee grace to repent of thy sins, will not pardon thee after thy repentance?—*St. Ambrose.*

It was a custom among the ancient Romans for the judges, whenever they absolved any accused person at the bar, to write the letter *A* upon the indictment—that is, *Absolvimus*, "We absolve him." If they judged him guilty, they wrote *C*—that is, *Condemnamus*, "We condemn him." If they found the cause difficult and doubtful, they wrote *N L*—that is, *Non Liquet*, "We cannot tell what to make of it"—the term being very much like *Ignoramus* in our common law, which is written upon a bill of indictment when the evidence is so defective as to leave the judges unable to determine the guilt or innocence of the party accused. But it is otherwise with the all-knowing God with whom we have to do. He cannot be ignorant of the many sins wherewith we provoke him daily. He knoweth us to be wretched, miserable, and guilty sinners, so that he may well write *Condemno*, and doom us to the place of torment with the devil and his angels. Yet such is his mercy to poor, penitent sinners that he invites and wooes them to forsake their sin and come to him that he may be gracious to them, and is ever ready to pass by their offenses and, instead of *Condemno*, to write with the pen of pardon *Absolvo*—"My son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee."

Sola fides justificat, sed fides non est sola.—*Melanchthon.*

XII.

JUSTIFICATION.

When an awakened sinner repents of his sin and accepts Jesus Christ by faith as his personal Saviour, he has done his part in his own salvation. These are the conditions of salvation on the human side. We come now to consider God's part in man's salvation.

Justification and Regeneration Distinguished.—The act of God in saving men consists in (1) the justification and (2) the regeneration of the penitent believer. So entirely are these the work of God that we may say that man has nothing whatever to do with his own justification and regeneration, save that he, aided by divine grace, fulfills the conditions upon which God justifies and regenerates him. "Who can forgive sins but God only?" "It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?" It is with the first of these divine elements of salvation—justification—that we have now to do; regeneration will furnish the theme for a subsequent study. We should remark here, however, that whatever has to do with man's relation to the divine government and law, with his actual sin or voluntary transgression of God's law, and with his guilt and liability to punishment on account of willful sin, these all concern his justification

and not his regeneration; while sinfulness, sin as inhering in and affecting the moral nature, and exerting a bias toward actual sin (whether this bias be inherited or self-superinduced), is a matter that concerns his regeneration, and not his justification. In other words, justification is something done by God *for* a penitent sinner, removing the divine condemnation on account of his past sins; while regeneration is something done *upon* him and *in* him, breaking the dominion of this bias toward sin, and divinely implanting within him a gracious ability and bias toward righteousness. "He is faithful and just to *forgive* us our sins, and to *cleanse* us from all unrighteousness."

Justification Defined.—Justification may be defined as that "act of God's free grace wherein he pardoneth all our sins, and accepteth us as righteous in his sight, only for the sake of Christ." "The plain, scriptural notion of justification is pardon, the forgiveness of sins. It is that act of God the Father whereby, for the sake of the propitiation made by the blood of his Son, he showeth forth his righteousness (or mercy) by the remission of sins that are past." (Wesley.)

Justification in the Old Testament.—In the Old Testament the words most commonly used to designate the doctrine are "pardon" and "forgive." Thus the prayer of the Psalmist (xxv. 11) is: "For thy name's

sake, O Lord, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great." Isaiah's (lv. 7) exhortation is: "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." For the sins of all alike it was provided in the Old Testament (Lev. iv.) that "the priest shall make an atonement for his sin that he hath committed, and it shall be forgiven him." Jeremiah (xxxi. 34) says that God will not only forgive, but forget: "For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." When a man says, "I will forgive you, but I will never forget the wrong you have done me," the implication is that his forgiveness is not altogether sincere and complete. For one to declare frankly and fervently that he will both forgive and forget is only an expressive way of saying that his forgiveness is sincere and heartfelt.

New Testament Synonyms of Justification.— "Thy sins are forgiven thee," were the simple but omnipotent words which our Lord used when freeing penitent souls from the bondage of Satan. His final commission was that "repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name." Of the publican who prayed "God be merciful to me a sinner," it was said that he "went down to his house justified." "Be it known unto you, men and brethren," said Paul at Antioch, "that through this man is preached

unto you the forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things." "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness. Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works, saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." (Rom. iv. 5–8.) Christ "was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification." (Rom. iv. 25.) "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." (Rom. v. 1.) "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." (Acts v. 31.) "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." (Eph. i. 7.) "Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus." (Rom. iii. 24.) "And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ." (Phil. iii. 9.) It will thus be seen that the meaning of justification is made very plain in Scripture by the use of numerous terms of synonymous or equivalent meaning: "pardon," "forgiveness," "remission of sins," "covering of sin," "blot-

ting out of sins," "non-imputation of sin," "imputation of righteousness," "faith counted for righteousness." These terms thus used explain each other.

Justification a More Significant Term Than Pardon.—It may perhaps be asked why it is, if justification means simple pardon, that the Bible and Christian theology have so largely used the more difficult term "justification," rather than the simpler "pardon," to represent the doctrine of which we are now writing. This admits of a satisfactory answer. The important and central idea in justification is pardon, so far as the immediate salvation of a sinner is concerned; but if the sinner's salvation be viewed in connection with the whole redemptive scheme, justification is a far more expressive and appropriate term. The adjectives "just" and "righteous," the nouns "justification" and "righteousness," and the verb "justify," are all different forms of the same word, and they emphasize the fact that God's method of saving the sinner is not only merciful, but also, and preeminently, just. Pardon, as we see it exercised, is something done, not according to law, but above law, and sometimes even contrary to law and justice. It is the act of a governor or chief executive, acting not under and according to law and justice, but rather from motives of clemency and mercy. Justification, on the other hand, is a method of pardon which has reference no less to justice than to mercy. God the

Father is here acting as Judge; and Jesus Christ by his sufferings and death has fully satisfied the demands of the law, whose new and gracious conditions are met by the penitence and faith of the sinner. "Justification by faith," therefore, is a method of salvation which *declares* "*the righteousness of God* which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe," and shows how he can be "just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." Thus "*grace reigns through righteousness.*" To say that justification is a "forensic" term, as is common in theology, means not only that it is something done *for* us, as distinct from the Romish view that it is something done *in* us; but it means that in pardoning the sinner God is acting according to law. This, however, is a very different thing from saying that the sinner is saved "by the law," by a system of "legal righteousness." "The blessing in question is conferred upon mankind in a manner which exhibits the righteousness or justice of God in equal prominence with his goodness and mercy." "The forgiveness of sin may be the act of mere mercy, not only without any respect to the dictates of justice, but in violation of its principles. Justification is an act of mercy, indeed, but of mercy in connection with justice and under its control. It is mercy that pardons, but justice that justifies." (Hare.) "Justification is more than pardon. To

pardon is, in the exercise of sovereign prerogative, to waive the execution of the penal sanctions of the law; to *justify* is to declare that the demands of the law are satisfied, not waived. Pardon is a sovereign act; justification is a judicial act." (Hodge.)

Righteousness Not Imputed.—It is an error to affirm that in justification the righteousness of Christ is imputed to the elect believer. This is nowhere affirmed in the Bible. The "imputed righteousness of Christ" is a theological phrase which is capable of a true explanation; but to most readers it is confusing and misleading, and should, therefore, be seldom, if ever, used. To impute is to accredit, to account, to reckon to any one. The personal guilt or righteousness of one individual can never properly be imputed to another, though one man may suffer certain consequences of another's sin and receive certain benefits from another's righteousness. The personal guilt of Adam's transgression was never imputed to his descendants, nor that of the elect to Christ; though Adam's descendants do suffer certain consequences of his sin, and Christ's sufferings were in consequence of sin not his own. So, too, it is equally improper to say that the personal and active righteousness of Christ is imputed to elect believers, though it is quite true that the benefits of Christ's righteousness do graciously accrue to all mankind. If now by saying that "the righteousness of Christ is imputed to believers" it is

simply meant to affirm that it is only by the active and passive and meritorious righteousness of Christ that we are saved, and not by anything meritorious in us or done by us, then the phrase stands for what is unquestionably true. But a phrase that has such theological associations as this, and that is so easily capable of misconstruction, may well be substituted by another and simpler "form of sound words."

The Relation of Justifying Faith to Works.—There is no contradiction whatever between Paul's "faith without works" as the condition of salvation, and James's "faith with works" as the proof of salvation. Paul in Romans describes faith as the condition of salvation to the ungodly, whereas James in his Epistle is distinguishing between true and false faith, as it is found among professing Christians. Hence Paul says: "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness;" "a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." These and other passages teach that a sinner is never saved by any works of righteousness that he may do; that the one and only meritorious ground of justification is the suffering and death of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the one and only condition of justification is personal faith in Jesus Christ. A sinner's works can never save him, not even his prayers nor his alms, nor his faith itself, considered as a good work. With him salvation by

works is contrasted with salvation by faith. With the professing Christian who claims to have faith, however, the case is quite different. With him works are the proof that his faith is genuine and saving, and the absence of works signifies the absence of true faith. Of these James writes: "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? . . . Faith, if it have not works, is dead, being alone. . . . Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only."

The Fruits of Justification Defined.—The nature and results of justification have been well defined thus: "They that are of Christ, who abide in him, have crucified the flesh, with its affections and lusts. They abstain from all those works of the flesh, . . . hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, . . . envyings, . . . from every design and word and work to which the corruption of nature leads. Although they feel the root of bitterness in themselves, yet are they endued with power from on high to trample it continually under foot, so that it cannot spring up to trouble them; insomuch that every fresh assault which they undergo only gives them fresh occasion of praise, of crying out, 'Thanks be unto God which giveth us the victory through Jesus Christ our Lord.' . . . They now walk after the Spirit both in their hearts and lives. They are

taught of him to love God and their neighbor, with a love which is as a well of water, springing up into everlasting life. And by him they are led into every holy desire, into every desire and heavenly temper, till every thought which rises in their hearts is holiness unto the Lord." "They who walk after the Spirit are also led by him into all holiness of conversation. Their speech is always in grace, seasoned with salt, with the love and fear of God. No corrupt communication comes out of their mouth, but only that which is good, that which is to the use of edifying, which is meet to minister grace to the hearers. And herein do they exercise themselves day and night to do only the things that please God. . . . Being filled with faith and with the Holy Ghost, they possess in their hearts and show forth in their lives, in the whole course of their words and actions, the genuine fruits of the Spirit of God—namely, love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, fidelity, meekness, temperance, and whatsoever else is lovely or praiseworthy. They adorn in all things the gospel of God our Saviour." (From John Wesley's Sermon on the "First Fruits of the Spirit.")

God's Forgiveness of Man Conditioned on Man's Forgiveness of His Fellow-Man.—To make full reparation for wrong done to others and ask their forgiveness is hard enough—so hard that only divine grace can enable one to do it; but to cherish a spirit of for-

giveness toward those who have wronged us is a condition which is perhaps more difficult still to fulfill. And yet no condition of salvation is more strongly emphasized by our Lord than this. "Forgive us our trespasses *as we have forgiven* those who trespass against us" is the language which Christ puts into our mouths for daily prayer. Indeed, so important is this matter that our Lord returns to it, as if he would make it yet stronger: "For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." When repentance, the forsaking of all sin, has gone so deep as to enable one to replace hatred with love, and feelings of condemnation with the spirit of forgiveness, it has reached the innermost depths of the heart where the seat of sin is; and when sin is dethroned and driven thence, it is a quick and easy matter "with the heart to believe unto righteousness and with the lips to make confession unto salvation."

The Ground of Justification.—The meritorous ground of justification is the righteousness of Christ. This is clearly stated in our Ninth and Tenth Articles of Religion, which are a faithful reproduction, respectively, of the teachings of the apostles Paul and James: "We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings:

wherefore, that we are justified by faith only, is a most wholesome doctrine, and very full of comfort." "Good works . . . are the fruits of faith, and follow after justification, . . . and spring out of a true and lively faith, insomuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known as a tree is discerned by its fruit." Thus, while it is true that we are justified by faith alone, it is also true that the faith by which we are justified is not alone. This simple Scripture doctrine concerning the relation of good works to justification is equally distant, on the one hand, from the Romish dogma concerning "the merit of good works" in securing salvation; and on the other, from the Antinomian doctrine of "justification by imputed righteousness," which rejects good works as wholly unnecessary to salvation. As to the nature of justification then, we say it is the pardon of sin. As to the condition of justification, it is faith in Christ. The ground of justification is the righteousness of Christ. The evidence and fruits of justification are good works.

Thanks be unto God that he has made it possible for guilty sinners to be pardoned and restored to the divine favor by faith in Jesus Christ! To every penitent and trusting sinner who comes to the Father pleading the merits of the suffering, crucified, and exalted Son of God, the Spirit sweetly whispers: "*God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*"

A PRAYER FOR PARDON ANSWERED

Arise, my soul, arise;
Shake off thy guilty fears:
The bleeding Sacrifice
In my behalf appears.
Before the throne my Surety stands;
My name is written on his hands.

He ever lives above,
For me to intercede;
His all-redeeming love,
His precious blood, to plead.
His blood atoned for all our race,
And sprinkles now the throne of grace

Five bleeding wounds he bears,
Received on Calvary.
They pour effectual prayers;
They strongly speak for me.
"Forgive him, O forgive," they cry,
"Nor let that ransomed sinner die!"

The Father hears him pray,
His dear anointed One.
He cannot turn away
The presence of his Son;
His Spirit answers to the blood,
And tells me I am born of God.

My God is reconciled:
His pard'ning voice I hear;
He owns me for his child,
I can no longer fear.
With confidence I now draw nigh,
And Father, Abba, Father, cry.

Charles Wesley.

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XIII.

REGENERATION.

"As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God. . . . Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." (John i. 12, 13; iii. 3-8.

"Our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. . . . Now, being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end eternal life." (Rom. vi. 6, 22.)

"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of God's dear Son." "And you, being dead in your sins, . . . hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses." (Col. i. 13; ii. 13.)

"Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures." (Jas. i. 18.)

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." (1 John v. 1.)

Though God be good, and free be heaven,
No force divine can love compel;
And, though the song of sins forgiven
May sound through lowest hell,
The sweet persuasion of his voice
Respects thy sanctity of will.
He giveth day; thou hast thy choice
To walk in darkness still.—*Whittier.*

The power to set the heart right, to renew the springs of action, comes from Christ. The sense of the infinite worth of the single soul and the recoverableness of a man at his worst, are the gifts of Christ. The freedom from guilt, the forgiveness of sins, come from Christ's cross; the hope of immortality springs from Christ's grave. Personal conversion means for life a personal religion, a personal trust in God, a personal debt to Christ, a personal dedication to his cause. These, brought about how you will, are supreme things to aim at, supreme losses if they are missed.—*Henry Drummond.*

The truth in God's breast
Lies trace upon trace on ours impressed:
Though he is so bright, and we so dim,
We are made in his image to witness him.

Robert Browning.

And ah for a man to arise in me,
That the man I am may cease to be.—*Tennyson.*

XIII.

REGENERATION.

The Fatherhood of God is a doctrine which naturally carries along with it the sonship of man. If God is the Father of all men, then it follows that all men are his sons—his sons by nature and birth, by virtue of being created in his image. What necessity, then, for a rebirth, for regeneration? it may be asked. The question is easily answered. If man be compared and contrasted with other things on this planet, with the material, vegetable, and animal creation, he is always regarded in the Scriptures as a son of God. But in so far as he is regarded as a free agent under moral law and government, and capable of obedience and disobedience to the commands of God, who is a righteous Ruler as well as a Father, and in so far as his moral nature is capable of manifesting conformity or disconformity to the moral nature and law of God, to that extent his relation of sonship is seriously affected by sin. As sin is disconformity to the law and nature of God, all who are sinners are regarded as having forfeited their relation of sonship and as needing a work of divine grace in order to change their sinful natures and restore them to the precious and sacred character of sons of God. We

have seen that as Christ is the Saviour of all men, but especially of them that believe, so God is the Father of all men, but especially of them that love him. To them alone who renounce sin, and receive Christ, is power given to become the sons of God. As it is man, not Christ, who limits the atonement; so it is man, not God, who limits sonship. It is sin in man and sin alone that can exclude him from salvation and sonship. But even though he may have forfeited his sonship by sin, there is still hope for his restoration. That hope is in his regeneration.

Justification without Regeneration an Incomplete Salvation.—In justification all past sins are pardoned; but if the sinner's salvation ended with this, he would be left in possession of a sinful nature, which would inevitably lead him to repeat his former sins or to commit continually new acts of sin. In order to make salvation complete, therefore, not only must all past sins be forgiven and blotted out, but such a change must be wrought in the moral nature of the sinner as will break the dominion of indwelling sin and create within him a gracious bias toward virtue and holiness. This important and radical transformation is called regeneration. It is wrought at the same time as justification and conditioned upon the same act of faith.

Inherited and Acquired Sinfulness Necessitates Regeneration.—The inherited bias toward sin, which char-

acterizes all men by nature, and which renders regeneration necessary, is, in the case of adult sinners, strengthened and increased by actual and willful sin. Indeed, if there were no inherited bias to sin, oft-repeated acts of willful sin would beget sinful habit and sinful character, and these would constitute a bias toward sin the dominion of which could be broken only by a divine act of regeneration. This inherited and acquired depravity or corruption of moral nature which calls for regeneration is, if anything, a more serious obstacle to man's salvation than those sins which call for justification. If we might conceive of a sinner as justified and not yet regenerated (which is, in fact, never the case), and as dying in that state, he could be sent neither to hell nor to heaven. His justification removes all liability of punishment, but does not in itself alone fit him for heaven; it is his regeneration which makes him a son and fits him for his heavenly inheritance.

Regeneration Defined.—Regeneration may be defined as "that mighty change in man wrought by the Holy Spirit, by which the dominion which sin has over him in his natural state is broken and abolished, so that, with full choice of will and the energy of right affections, he serves God freely and runs in the way of his commandments. . . . It is that renewal of our nature which gives us dominion over sin and enables us to serve God from love, and not merely from

fear." This excellent definition, by Richard Watson, neither underestimates nor overestimates the work of regeneration in man's salvation. Some have so treated regeneration as to belittle it and make it but a partial and incomplete salvation, reserving for a second and subsequent experience the radical and mighty change from sin to holiness which alone would justify us in considering the believer as really and truly saved from sin and meet for his heavenly inheritance. Over against this error we affirm that regeneration is, like all God's acts, perfect and complete of its kind, and that God therein does all that, in the nature of the case, needs to be done or can be done, instantaneously, to effect the radical or thorough salvation of the penitent and believing sinner. Others have erred in the opposite direction, unduly exaggerating the work done in regeneration, teaching a doctrine, which accords neither with the New Testament nor with universal Christian experience, making of those who are but "babes in Christ" little less than mature and perfect saints, and representing truly regenerate believers as no longer having any battle with sin in their own hearts and natures. But experience proves that the regenerate Christian soon discovers that there is much that his own heart calls sinful in him and about him after his conversion, and that, instead of having then won the final victory over all sin, only the ascendency over sin was secured, and the

real battle with sin is then but truly begun. We say there is much that "his heart calls sinful" left in him after regeneration; perhaps we should so far modify that statement as to say that there is not a little difference of opinion among theologians as to whether or not the evil that the believer has to contend with in his own nature after regeneration may properly be called sin, or sinfulness. We shall find it more convenient to reserve the discussion of this special point for a later chapter on "Sin in the Regenerate."

The Mode of Regeneration Indefinable.—In regeneration no new faculties are either added to or taken away from the soul of man. There are both good and evil in the nature of the unregenerate; but the evil is in dominion, and maintains an ever-increasing ascendency over the good, so that an unregenerate man is ever becoming more and more sinful. In the regenerate, likewise, there are both good and evil, but the good principle is in dominion over the evil, and the believer maintains an ever-increasing ascendency over the evil whose dominion was destroyed in regeneration. Exactly how the dominion of sin is broken in regeneration—whether it is the result of the restoration to the soul of the Holy Spirit, whose indwelling presence was lost through sin, or whether it is due to the expulsive power of a new and divinely implanted affection, or whether it consists in some

more immediate operation of divine power—is not definitely revealed to us. The reality and necessity of regeneration are revealed as certain; but the mode of regeneration, like the mode of the divine Triunity, is incomprehensible. It is a truth that transcends but does not contradict human reason. We know *that* it is; we cannot understand *how* it is. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit." (John iii. 8.)

Regeneration as Related to the Divine and the Human Will.—The Holy Scriptures teach us that the author of regeneration is God the Holy Spirit: "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John i. 13.) "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." (John iii. 6.) But while regeneration, considered in itself alone, is entirely God's work, yet it is not wrought until certain previous conditions have been fulfilled by man. The conditions of regeneration on man's part are repentance and faith: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts ii. 38.) "As many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." (John i. 12.)

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." (1 John v. i.) Justification is more immediately and logically connected with repentance and faith than regeneration is, and this for obvious reasons. Repentance and justification are both concerned with actual sin and its guilt, while regeneration is concerned with the sin of nature, or hereditary and acquired depravity. Hence it is most common and proper to speak of repentance and faith as the conditions of justification or pardon. Logically (that is, in the order of thought), justification precedes regeneration; but chronologically (that is, in the order of time), justification and regeneration are contemporaneous. As justification and regeneration take place at the same time, and as the one never takes place without the other, whatever is the condition of the one is necessarily the condition of the other.

Scripture Method of Presenting the Doctrine.—The doctrine of regeneration may be best studied as it is presented in the Bible under numerous figures:

1. It is represented as a divine *generation:* "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of his creatures." (Jas. i. 18.) "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God: and whosoever loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him." (1 John v. i. R. V.)

2. In like manner it is represented as a *new and di-*

vine birth. The classic passage of the New Testament—Christ's conversation with Nicodemus (John iii. 1–13)—represents it under this term: "Except a man be born again [or from above], he cannot see the kingdom of God. . . . Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." "Ye know that every one that doeth righteousness is born of him." "Whatsoever is born of God overcometh the world." (1 John ii. 29; v. 4.)

3. Another term employed is that of *creation:* "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works." (Eph. ii. 10.) "Put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." (Eph. iv. 24.) "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Cor. v. 17.)

4. It is a *death and crucifixion unto sin, and a resurrection unto life* with Christ: "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." (Gal. v. 24.) "And you, being dead in your sins, . . . hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses." (Col. ii. 13.) "Our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." (Rom. vi. 6.)

5. *Circumcision* is another figure: "The Lord thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the Lord thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." (Deut. xxx. 6.) "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ." (Col. ii. 11.)

6. Again, it is described as *deliverance from the bondage or slavery of sin:* "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the saints in light: who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son." (Col. i. 12.) "For sin shall not have dominion over you. . . . But thanks be to God, that, whereas ye were servants of sin, . . . being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness. . . . Now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto sanctification, and the end eternal life." (Rom. vi. 14–22. R. V.)

7. Another figure is that of *washing* or *cleansing:* "According to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." (Tit. iii. 5.) "Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. . . . Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." (Ps. li. 2, 7.) "But

ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Cor. vi. 11.) Of this spiritual cleansing, baptism with water is the divinely appointed symbol.

8. It is also spoken of as a *renewal* or *restoration to the divine image:* "The new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him." (Col. iii. 10.) "Be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind." (Rom. xii. 2.) "Conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." (Rom. viii. 29.) "But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." (2 Cor. iii. 18.)

9. It is represented as taking away the old heart of sin and placing *a new heart* in its stead. The heart, as we saw, is represented by Christ as the seat of sin. Nothing could be more appropriate, then, than to represent regeneration as the gift of a new heart wherein dwelleth righteousness and love. "Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me," was the penitent psalmist's prayer. A character "written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart," is a form of words which Paul uses to describe this great

spiritual change in writing to the Corinthian Christians. An Old Testament prophet had used the same strong figure: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." (Ezek. xxxvi. 26.)

10. Closely connected with regeneration and Christian sonship is the term *adoption*. Adoption is that act of God the Father by which he reinstates into his family as sons and heirs those who, disinherited by sin, had become aliens and enemies. "That we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ." (Gal. iv. 5–7.) Some theologians treat adoption as if it were a work of divine grace distinct from but coördinate with regeneration. We think this a mistake. The two terms stand for the same work of grace. There are two ways of becoming a son: either by generation and birth, or by adoption. As the former is the natural method, we think it the preferable term, though either term may be employed with perfect propriety to designate the doctrine under consideration.

Baptismal Regeneration not Taught in Scripture.—There is no foundation whatever in the Bible for the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. Water baptism, being one of the positive and universal commands of Christ, is obligatory upon all, but it is never represented as the instrument of regeneration. While we are said to be "born of water," the words are immediately added, "*and of the Spirit.*" The only thing which is referred to as the instrument of regeneration is the "Word of God;" "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth." (Jas. i. 18.) "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." (1 Pet. i. 23.) The doctrine of baptismal regeneration is one of the crowning errors of Roman Catholic theology, and even some branches of Protestantism are tainted by the same error. According to the teachings of the Church of Rome, all sins preceding baptism are washed away by its holy waters; but all sins that are committed after baptism are to be removed either by penance in this life or by purgatory in the life to come. According to this doctrine, all that is required of adult candidates for baptism in order to the efficacy of the sacrament is a passive acquiescence in the offices of the Church, and an absence of *mortal* sin; no positive act of the will, such as is manifested in repentance and faith, being required. The regeneration of all baptized in-

fants is absolutely assured. But unbaptized infants, dying, cannot be admitted to heaven. For their eternal abode a special place of punishment is provided, called *limbus infantum;* it lacks the positive pains that are a part of the future punishment of adults who die in sin. If regeneration were a mere change of status or external relationship, the doctrine of baptismal regeneration might be held without offense to a true scriptural theology; but such a definition is totally inadequate to meet the requirements of a term which represents the most decisive and radical work that is wrought by grace in connection with man's salvation.

Willful Sin Incompatible with the Regenerate State.—While it may be possible for theologians to hold that a certain sinfulness of nature is found in believers after their regeneration, we think the Scriptures plainly teach that all actual and willful sins are incompatible with the regenerate state: "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." (1 John iii. 9.) This does not mean that a regenerate believer cannot backslide and fall into sin, but that he who consciously and willfully commits sin cannot at the same time be a regenerate Christian and continue such. It is therefore quite out of the question to quote this passage in favor of the doctrine of the necessary perseverance of the saints, for

those who hold that doctrine teach that all regenerate Christians do sin daily in word, thought, and deed as long as they live in the flesh, while this passage teaches that regenerate Christians are free from willful sins, but leaves us to infer that they may forfeit their regenerate state, commit sin, and be finally lost. If believers should be "overtaken in a fault" and be found guilty of what might be called "semi-willful" sins, "sins of surprise," which destroy the equilibrium of their religious state, they will instantly, upon discovery of the same, turn away from them, as they do from all known sins, with a penitent faith, which ever carries along with itself, in God's gracious provisions, perpetual pardon and cleansing. If it can be shown that a believer is consciously guilty of any sins (be they called willful or semi-willful), and does not, *pari passu*, with the knowledge of the same, turn from them with penitence and faith, we have no authority in the Bible for affirming that such a one is and continues to be, in spite of his sins, an accepted and regenerate child of God. We should not recognize any conscious and voluntary sins whatsoever as compatible with continuance in the regenerate state, whether they be located in the heart and feelings, or in the will. "He that is, by faith, born of God," says John Wesley, "sinneth not, (1) by any habitual sin, for all habitual sin is sin reigning, but sin cannot reign in any that be-

lieveth; nor (2) by any willful sin, for his will, while he abideth in the faith, is utterly set against all sin, and abhorreth it as deadly poison; nor (3) by any sinful desire, for he continually desireth the holy and perfect will of God, and any tendency to an unholy desire he by the grace of God stifleth in the birth; nor (4) does he sin by infirmities, whether in act, word, or thought, for his infirmities have no concurrence of his will, and without this they are not properly sins." *

The Fruits of Regeneration.—The foregoing may be called the negative results of regeneration, and consist in the freeing of the soul from sin. The positive results are no less important and radical. We quote again from the same great preacher of righteousness:

To be a son or a child of God is to love God, who hath thus loved you, as you never did love any creature, so that ye are constrained to love all men as yourselves; with a love not only ever burning in your hearts and flowing out in all your actions and conversation, but making your whole life one labor of love, one continued obedience to those commands: "Be ye merciful as God is merciful;" "Be ye holy as I the Lord am holy;" "Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect." †

* From sermon on "Salvation by Faith," 1738. This was Wesley's first publication after his conversion; and it is a curious coincidence that he should have preached the same sermon (or at least on the same subject and text) in 1791, the year of his death.

† From Wesley's sermon on the "Marks of the New Birth."

In that instant we are born again, born from above, born of the Spirit; there is a *real* as well as a *relative* change. We are inwardly renewed by the power of God. We feel "the love of God shed abroad in our heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us," producing love to all mankind and more especially to the children of God; expelling the love of the world, the love of pleasure, of ease, of honor, of money, together with pride, anger, self-will, and every other evil temper; in other words, changing the earthly, sensual, devilish mind into the mind which was in Christ Jesus.*

Love and praise and prayer are the breath of every soul which is truly born of God. . . . The life of God in the soul of a believer immediately and necessarily implies an unceasing presence of God, the loving, pardoning God manifested to the heart and perceived by faith; and an unceasing return of love, praise, and prayer, offering up all the thoughts of our hearts, all the words of our tongues, all the works of our hands, all our body, soul, and spirit, to be a holy sacrifice acceptable unto God in Christ Jesus.†

Regeneration and Reformation Distinguished.—It is only when reformation is preceded or accompanied by regeneration that it can be said to have a secure foundation and to inspire confidence in its permanence. There may be such a thing as reformation without regeneration, but there can be no true experience of regeneration without reformation. Reformation is an outer work; regeneration is inner. There is a great difference between whitewashing and washing

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* From sermon on the "Scripture Way of Salvation."

† From sermon on 1 John iii. 9; "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin."

white. It is just the difference between reformation and regeneration. The distinction between the two has been well expressed by a recent writer. "Regeneration," says Dr. John Watson, "is never to be confounded with reformation. The former is used of the spiritual world; the latter, of the moral. The former has to do with the soul, where are the springs of life; the latter has to do with conduct, which is only a form of life. In regeneration the old vessel is not repaired and repainted; it is rather remelted and remolded, and the necessity for this entire and unflinching process lies in the constitution of human nature. No change is worth the name which begins from without and works inward; every change which is to accomplish a perfect result must begin within and work outward."

The Position of Regeneration among the Doctrines of Personal Salvation.—The elements of personal salvation have a natural and logical order, and it is important to observe this order if we would rightly understand the doctrines of grace singly and collectively. To place a doctrine out of its proper place can but result in confusion, and therefore lead to error. The order which we have seen is the true one is this: (1) Conviction of sin or spiritual awakening, (2) repentance, (3) faith, (4) justification, and (5) regeneration. The first is the work of the Holy Spirit, and is wrought irresistibly and unconditionally, in

that a man may be convicted of sin even against his will. The second and third are the work of man in the exercise of his free agency, the Holy Spirit doing nothing more than to impart gracious ability for the fulfillment of these conditions of salvation. Then comes God's work in justification, or the pardon of actual sin, and regeneration, or the breaking of the dominion of the sin of nature. In the Westminster system of theology regeneration is made to come first in the order of time. It is there identified with effectual calling, and is represented as being wrought by God irresistibly and unconditionally—indeed, no preceding conditions could properly be exacted by God because man is regarded as being in a state of such spiritual death and such utter moral impotence as to render the fulfillment of any and all conditions on his part impossible. Personal salvation in this system is conditioned not on an act of the human will manifested in repentance and faith, but on an act of the Divine Will in eternity, manifested in election. Hence in this system we have: (1) Election to salvation by God before the creation of the race; (2) birth into a state of spiritual death and utter moral impotence; (3) Christ dies for the elect and for them alone, and his death secures absolutely the salvation of every one for whom he died; (4) effectual calling, which is but another name for regeneration wrought unconditionally and irresistibly upon every elect individual in

God's own chosen time; (5) saving faith, the first act of a newborn soul after regeneration, and represented as being itself the gift of God; (6) justification, adoption, and sanctification, which are all represented as a result of saving faith; and (7) repentance, which is represented as the gift of God and also a result of saving faith.* If this system did not teach that every one who is "effectually called" or regenerated is infallibly and finally saved, we might say that what we have called conviction of sin by the Holy Spirit they have designated as "effectual calling." If again they had said that repentance and faith are conditions of mind and heart which not only precede justification and regeneration, but also abide and follow after justification in a yet more intense hatred of sin and deeper trust in Christ, then we could have harmonized their view with our own. But their system makes man utterly incapable of exercising faith and repentance until he has been regenerated, and after that he cannot fall; and it is therefore impossible to harmonize the two systems.

The Proper Doctrine to Preach to Sinners.—The view which any one takes of this subject will necessarily affect most seriously his manner of explaining the way of salvation to the unregenerate world. Fortunately many preachers who avow faith in this sys-

* See Hodge's "Theology of Shorter Catechism," pp. 57–67, 123–125.

tem of theology, in preaching to unregenerate men urge them to repent of their sins and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ in such a manner as to make them feel that repentance and faith are conditions which they themselves can fulfill, by the help of the Spirit, if they will; and upon these conditions being fulfilled, God will justify and regenerate them. And by the blessing of God upon such preaching many souls are saved. But we cannot conceive of a soul being led to seek salvation by means of a sermon which should contain a statement of the *ordo salutis*, or doctrines of grace, as set forth in the Westminster standards. Imagine a preacher delivering to any average audience of unconverted people a message which should be in part as follows: "I invite you to turn from your sin and to seek the salvation of your souls in view of the following facts: (1) You were, long before your birth, either elected to life by God or else passed over as a reprobate. (2) If you are one of the elect, God will effectually call and regenerate you in his own good time. (3) As soon as regenerated you will exercise saving faith, which is the gift of God to newborn souls. (4) You will then receive justification, or the pardon of all your sins. (5) You will also receive, as a result of your regeneration and your act of saving faith, the grace of repentance, which is also the gift of God." From such an explanation and exposition of the way of salvation as

this a sinner might well justify himself in reaching the conclusion: "If these things be true, there is no reason why I should concern myself about my own salvation."

The Privileges of Sonship.—Special divine guidance is promised to the regenerate: "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." "It is impossible," says Dr. Pope, "to exaggerate the blessedness of this interior and exterior guidance of the Holy Spirit given to the children of God. He is literally to them all, and more than all, that the present Saviour was to his disciples. He is the ever-present Finger of God directing and Power of God defending the followers of Christ." Not far from this promise of divine guidance is one equally as precious to all of God's faithful and elect children: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God." It is equally impossible to exaggerate the blessedness of this promise, which contains the divine guarantee of a special providence over all who love God and prove their love by keeping his commandments. But the promise is not that worldly good and wealth and creature comforts shall be brought by the Heavenly Father to his child; it means that all things shall be made to work together for his *spiritual good*, shall contribute toward making him a holier and more useful man—and this is what the true child of God desires above everything

else. Another privilege is heirship: "If children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ" —heirs of an inheritance that is "incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away; reserved in heaven for them who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." If earthly parents count nothing too dear for their children, how much more shall the Father which is in heaven give good things to them who are the objects of his love. But it is idle to undertake to enumerate the privileges that pertain to the sons of God. The child of a king has the privilege of immediate access into the presence of his royal father. Divine sonship is itself the supreme privilege that carries along with itself all lesser privileges, and all others are less than it. As the grandest proof of God's love for man is the gift of his Son, the next grandest is his making us sons of God and fellow-heirs with Christ: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him: for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." It is these exalted privileges that make Christian sonship "the central blessing of the Christian covenant."

THE SONS OF GOD.

Behold! what wondrous grace
The Father hath bestowed
On sinners of a mortal race,
To call them sons of God!

Nor does it yet appear
How great we must be made;
But when we see our Saviour here,
We shall be like our Head.

A hope so much divine
May trials well endure,
May purge our souls from sense and sin,
As Christ the Lord is pure.

If in my Father's love
I share a filial part,
Send down thy Spirit like a dove,
To rest upon my heart.

We would no longer lie
Like slaves beneath the throne;
My faith shall Abba, Father, cry,
And thou the kindred own.

Isaac Watts.

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XIV.

SANCTIFICATION.

"And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Cor. vi. 11.)

"If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work." (2 Tim. ii. 21.)

"For this is the will of God, even your sanctification. . . . For God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness." "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thess. iv. 3, 7; v. 23.)

"God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." (2 Thess. ii. 13.)

"Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth." (John xvii. 17.)

"That we might be partakers of his holiness. . . . Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." (Heb. xii. 10, 14.)

Manlike is it to fall into sin;
Fiendlike is it to dwell therein;
Christlike is it for sin to grieve;
Godlike is it all sin to leave.—*Longfellow.*

Suppose you had a son, and you forbade him to enter a place of contagion on pain of losing all you could leave him. But he goes, and is seized with the infection. He is guilty, for he has transgressed your command, but he is also diseased. Do you not perceive that your forgiving him does not heal him? He wants not only the father's pardon but the physician's aid; and the physician needs, in order to make a radical and permanent cure, not only to bring the disease under control and cure it within, but by disinfectants and fire and other means to destroy absolutely all the germs of the disease upon the patient and separate him from the contagion. In like manner the sinner needs a threefold work of grace to make his salvation from sin complete: justification, regeneration, and sanctification. Justification regards something done for us; regeneration, something done in us; sanctification, something done both for us and in us. The first may be called a change in our relation, the second a change in our nature, the third a change in our state. The first relieves us from punishment, the second gives us a title to heaven, the third gives us meetness for heaven.

The picture of a bullock between the plow and the altar, with the subscription, "Ready for either," is the symbol of Christian consecration. Ready for service or for sacrifice, ready to do or to suffer God's will, ready for longer life or for instant death, ready to descend to deeper depths of humiliation here, or to ascend amid the flames of the altar to the higher life of heaven.

XIV.

SANCTIFICATION.

JUSTIFICATION is a law term, and may be defined as that divine act which instates a sinner in or restores him to citizenship in the kingdom of God. Regeneration is a family term, and may be defined as that divine act which introduces or restores the pardoned sinner to sonship in the household of God. Sanctification is a temple term, and may be defined as that divine act which fits a man for worship in the temple of God. The kingdom, the home, the temple; a citizen, a son, a worshiper; righteousness, sonship, sanctification—this trinity of moral attributes and relationships belongs to every man who, having repented and believed, enters into the state of salvation. It is of the believer's sanctification, or holiness, that we wish now to speak, of that attribute of holiness, which belongs to every believer from the moment of his justification and regeneration. Of entire sanctification as a work of grace subsequent to regeneration we shall speak in a later chapter.

Sanctification Pertains to All Justified Believers.—All justified and regenerate believers are, as such, sanctified. "The term *sanctified*," says John Wesley, "is continually applied by St. Paul to all who were

justified. By this term alone he rarely, if ever, means 'saved from all sin.' Consequently it is not proper to use it in that sense, without adding the word *wholly*, *entirely*, or the like.* The inspired writers almost continually speak of or to those who were justified, but very rarely of or to those who were wholly sanctified. Consequently it behooves us to speak almost continually of the state of justification." That Mr. Wesley is correct in saying that sanctification, in the sense in which that term is used in the Bible, is an experience of all who are justified and regenerate, admits of easy and abundant proof by an appeal to Scripture and to all the standard commentators of the Christian Church. And just why Christian theology should have selected this particular Bible term (and nearly all systems of theology have done so) as the favorite one to represent a work of grace which is, whether progressive or instantaneous, almost wholly subsequent to regeneration, is not easy to see. We say "almost wholly subsequent;" for, as a matter of fact, all theories of sanctification recognize a progressive work that *be-*

*Unfortunately Mr. Wesley did not observe his own rule in the use of this term. His writings abound in instances where he used the word "sanctification," unqualified by any other term, in reference to a second work of grace, subsequent to regeneration, by which the believer is said to be "saved from *all* sin."

gins at regeneration. But this single fact hardly justifies the use that is made of this term in doctrinal theology. We must therefore distinguish between the biblical and the theological use of this term; and the reader should understand that it is sanctification as used in the Bible, and as experienced by all justified and regenerate believers at conversion, that determines our selection of the term as the heading for this chapter.

Sanctification and Holiness Translations of the Same Words in Hebrew and Greek.—Sanctification and holiness are translations of one and the same word both in Hebrew and in Greek, and hence they mean the same thing. The Hebrew (*kadosh*) and Greek (*hagios*) words, with all their derivatives, are used to define believers generally as those who are set apart to God. For any one, therefore, to suppose, in reading the Bible, that the term "sanctification," or "holiness," as there found refers to an experience into which one enters only at some definite time subsequent to regeneration, is to misunderstand the term. Such an interpretation of Scripture is not *exegesis*—that is, getting *out of* the Bible the thought which the inspired writer has put into it; it is rather *eisegesis*—that is, *reading into* a Bible term a meaning already in the mind of the reader but foreign to the mind of the inspired man who wrote it. We shall presently prove the applicability of these words to all who are

in a state of salvation by an examination of all the leading passages in the New Testament where this word (sanctification, or holiness) is used to describe the experience or character of a believer. But before doing so let us make some needed preliminary definitions and discriminations, that we may the better understand the word as used in the New Testament.

The Central Idea in Sanctification.—The central idea in sanctification, or holiness, alike in the Old Testament and in the New, is "separation from" and "set apart to." It signifies separation from the world, from that which is secular, from sin, and a setting apart to God, to his worship and service, and to that which is sacred. But such a separation from sin and consecration to God cannot take place without an internal work upon the heart and moral nature of man; and hence the word implies and carries along with it as a necessary accompaniment the idea of a subjective and internal work wrought at the same time upon the inner man. Whether this internal work be regarded as a part of sanctification itself, or be distinguished from it and identified as the work of regeneration contemporaneously wrought, is a matter about which there may be allowed differences of opinion, provided it is always recognized that the primary idea in scriptural sanctification is that of separation from sin and setting apart to God. This act,

whether regarded as God's act, or man's act, or a joint divine-human act, takes place cotemporaneously with justification and regeneration. And may we not say that in sanctification man has a part to perform such as he has not either in his justification or regeneration? In these latter operations of grace, considered in themselves alone, man has nothing whatever to do; they are God's work entirely. To say that man "justifies himself" (in the Scripture sense of pardon), or that he "regenerates himself," would be utterly irreconcilable with any form of sound words. But with sanctification it is different; there seems to be a human element in it that is not found in justification and regeneration. While God sanctifies, and sanctification is defined as a work of the Holy Spirit, there is a sense in which a man may be said to sanctify himself. Self-separation from the world and self-consecration to God are the human elements in sanctification, and do not exclude the divine element, sanctification by the Holy Spirit.

Sanctification as Separation from Sin.—The first element in sanctification is separation from sin. Separation from the sinful, and even from the secular, logically precedes the act of setting apart to the sacred. Before conversion the union between man and his sin is very close; indeed, the definition of sin as selfishness practically identifies the sinner and his sin; they are one, just as the new life is defined as "union

with Christ," "partaking of the divine nature." To make salvation from sin complete, not only must sin be pardoned in justification and its dominion broken by regeneration, but there must be a separation from sin, a tearing up as it were by the roots; either a tearing up of the man from his sin, or a tearing up of sin from the man, it matters not which it be. This is the work of sanctification in conversion, and will continue to be the work of sanctification after conversion, if any of the "roots of sin" are found to have been left imbedded in the moral nature of the justified and regenerate man. At conversion the penitent believer, by virtue of the work of sanctification that is then wrought in him and upon him, is separated from all sinfulness and sin then "in sight," then felt or known. As to whether or not any sin is left in the regenerate, unseen and unremoved at the time of their conversion, and if so, just what that sin is—*that* is a point to the consideration of which we shall presently devote an entire chapter. The point we establish now is, that, according to the Scriptures, sanctification, or separation from sin, is a work that takes place at the same time that sin is pardoned and its dominion broken.

Sanctification as Consecration.— The positive element in sanctification is consecration, or setting apart to God and to everything that God stands for in personal experience and ethical life—to God's possession, use,

and service—to the cultivation of every virtue, both active and passive, and to the performance of every Christian duty. To all that belongs to this side of Christian experience, life, and service, *as far as then seen and known*, the Christian is set apart, both by himself and by God, at the very moment of his conversion. Consecration to the divine possession means that at conversion the penitent believer, who has hitherto lived as if he belonged to himself and was his own master, now realizes that he is not his own, that he has been bought with a price, that One is his Master, even Christ, and that therefore it is his duty and privilege and delight to live for the glory of him to whom he belongs. Consecration to God's use means that the Christian is regarded as passive in the hands of God, as a channel of grace, an instrument which the Holy Spirit, the only real Agent recognized, uses for the accomplishment of his purposes. In consecration to God's service the emphasis is placed upon the free personality of the individual who at and in conversion assumes it as a part of his new life in Christ that he shall put forth all the activities and energies of his soul in working for God. All this is included in the law of sanctification as it applies to all Christians from the very moment of their conversion, and if the future shall reveal to them new duties and new virtues, or old duties and old virtues but now seen for the first time, the same law will apply at any

and all subsequent stages of the Christian life. The Christian is under obligation to all good that is seen or known.

Some General Uses of These Terms in Scripture.— Consistently with the distinction just made, we find that the word "sanctify," in the sense of consecration or setting apart to God for his possession and use, is applied in the Scripture to both persons and things. Man "consecrates" himself, he "dedicates" his possessions, he is "sanctified" by the Holy Spirit. While we observe this distinction in the use of these terms, they are all one word in Hebrew and Greek. The adjective "holy," the nouns "holiness" and "sanctification," and the verbs "to sanctify" and "to make holy," are all etymologically one and the same word, and hence have essentially the same meaning. The children of Israel are designated as "the holy people," because separated from the people around and set apart for God. The tabernacle and temple were for the same reason called the "holy sanctuary;" the seventh day, the "holy Sabbath;" the priesthood and gospel ministry, a "holy calling;" the Bible, the "holy Book." And so in the New Testament Christians are called the "saints," the "holy ones," the "sanctified ones," because set apart to God and consecrated to his service. In this sense all justified and regenerated believers are designated as "holy" and "sanctified," and this, as we

have above remarked, is the common use of these terms in the New Testament. To place the adjective "entire" before the word "sanctification," and then make "entire sanctification" represent a work subsequent to regeneration by which the believer is "saved from all sin," may be all right so far as theology is concerned—for theology must coin many terms to represent its doctrines—but it must be borne in mind that such use of the two words together can no more claim to be scriptural than to make the simple word "sanctification" represent such a doctrinal idea. If the term "sanctification," or "holiness," therefore, whether used singly or preceded by the word "entire," be used to designate the doctrine of the possible sinlessness and perfection of a believer, we should be careful to distinguish between the doctrine so designated and the meaning of the word, as defined above, in its strictly scriptural sense. Self-consecration and sanctification of the Spirit meet in the mystery of grace at the very threshold of the new life in Christ.

New Testament Use of the Adjective Holy.—That the adjective "holy" (*hagios*) is used in the New Testament to describe believers generally may be shown by reference to a number of passages. The Epistles of Paul to the Romans, First and Second Corinthians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians, Peter's first Epistle, and the Epistle of Jude are all

(as the reader will see by personal examination) addressed to people who are described as "holy." The word "saints" is the common rendering of the Greek word found in these passages. "To the saints" is a phrase that could just as correctly be translated "to the holy ones." The expression in the English Bible, "called *to be* saints," is in the Greek "called saints;" there is nothing to correspond with the words "to be," which, as shown by their being printed in italics, are supplied by the translators. In First Corinthians a fuller expression is used instead of "the saints"—viz., "To them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints"—and yet it will be remembered that it is this particular Church that Paul reproves for their envyings, strifes, animosities, and carnal-mindedness, the very sins which some people seem to suppose are more or less characteristic of all regenerate Christians until they are "sanctified." St. Peter describes the strangers scattered abroad to whom he addresses his first Epistle as those who are elect "through sanctification of the Spirit" (compare 2 Thess. ii. 13), while St. Jude addresses his Epistle "to them that are sanctified by God the Father." Whatever made these early converts to be Christians made them "holy," "saints," "sanctified." That is, sanctification, as that term is used in the New Testament, was included in and a part of their conversion —using this latter term in its popular

sense, as we shall continually do, to indicate the sum total of divine operations and human experiences, by which a sinner is transformed into a Christian.

New Testament Use of the Noun "Sanctification." —An examination of the use of the noun "sanctification" in the New Testament will yield a similar result. In Romans vi. 17–22 it is regenerate believers generally who are described as those who, having been formerly servants of sin, uncleanness, and iniquity, are now servants unto "righteousness" (justification) and "holiness" (sanctification). In Ephesians iv. 12 we read of "the perfecting of the *saints*," and in 2 Corinthians vii. 1 of "perfecting *holiness* in the fear of God," which shows that holiness belongs to believers as such from the moment of their regeneration, but their perfection is regarded as a continuous and progressive work. This same idea of progressive perfection is seen in the use which Paul makes of the word in First Thessalonians (iii. 12, 13), where increase in love and growth in grace looks forward to ultimate *establishment* in holiness, the emphasis here being upon the word "stablish." In the next chapter of the same Epistle the words, "This is the will of God, even your sanctification," are fully explained by the very next clause, "that ye should abstain from fornication," which shows its application to "every one that names the name of Christ." That "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord" is the

possession of all justified and regenerate believers, who are also described as "partakers of the divine holiness." (See Heb. xii. 10, 14.) In Ephesians iv. 22–24 sanctification is associated with "putting off the old man" and "putting on the new man," which expressions are universally interpreted by commentators as describing justification and regeneration. These are all the important passages where "sanctification," or "holiness," is used in application to Christian experience.

New Testament Use of the Verb "To Sanctify." — We cite a few instances of the use of the verb "to sanctify" (*hagiadzein*). In Acts xxvi. 18, we find faith, forgiveness, heirship (which is inseparable from sonship), and sanctification, a quaternion of sacred terms, thrown together in such a way as to indicate that they all go together and are inseparable; where one is the other three are. In 1 Corinthians vi. 11, we read: "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." The conjunction and particular correlation of these three things here (regeneration, sanctification and justification) and the location of "sanctification" between regeneration and justification, show again their inseparable connection: when one takes place the other two take place. In 1 Thessalonians v. 23, we read: "And the very God of peace

sanctify you wholly." Here the entire emphasis is on the word "wholly" (*holoteleis*), which is not an adverb but an adjective; it is a compound adjective, made up of two words, "whole" (*holos*) and "perfect" (*telos*), and hence is one of the strongest words in the Greek language. It means that wholeness or entireness or completeness that is reached only at the end (*telos*) of a process; it means "entire and final perfection," and, as used here, it indicates that perfection admits of degrees. The original and primitive idea of sanctification—viz., separation from evil and consecration to God—is brought out clearly in 2 Timothy ii. 21: "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, *sanctified*, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work." It is language that applies to every truly justified and regenerate man. In Hebrews x. 14, it is said of Christ that "by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified," which words indicate a distinction between sanctification and perfection, a distinction which runs throughout the entire New Testament. But, while this exegetical study has proved, or at least was meant to prove, that sanctification, as set forth in the Scriptures, is an experience and work of grace inseparable from justification and regeneration, whether logically or chronologically considered, and that it is to be distinguished from perfection, yet it has at the

same time revealed the fact that there is a doctrine of perfection clearly taught in the Scriptures. To that doctrine—Christian perfection—we shall come farther on in our studies of personal salvation.

The Divine Instrument of Sanctification.—The instrument of sanctification is "the truth," the divine "word of truth." Christ said: "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. . . . And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." (John xvii. 17, 19.) This rich passage needs to be studied by the aid of the best commentators to comprehend the largeness of its meaning. Christ's statement here that he "sanctifies" himself shows that the word does not always contain the idea of "separation from internal sin," though it may still include the idea of separation from all external sin that is in the world. Sanctification in his case did not include "separation from internal sin," simply because there was no sin in him from which to be separated. Self-consecration or self-dedication to the divine mission which he came to accomplish in the redemption of the world by his active and passive obedience is what our Lord's self-sanctification chiefly consisted in. The "high priestly prayer" which he here offers (John xvii. 1–26) for his apostles and all Christians who shall come after them has in view the application by the Holy Spirit of his atoning work to the salvation of all who

shall believe. It is noticeable that the instrument of sanctification here named, "the word of truth," is the same that is elsewhere said to be employed in regeneration: "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth." (Jas. i. 18; also 1 Pet. i. 23.) Through the truth, and through the truth alone, can man be sanctified. Truth is always opposed to error; and sanctifying truth, whatever else it may or may not involve or contain, must involve, so far as man is concerned, true ideas of sin and of God, of repentance and of faith. God's "word is truth;" Christ is "the way, *the truth*, and the life;" and "sanctification is of the Spirit." But if a man's mind is filled with misconceptions, confusions, and errors, it is impossible for these divine agencies to accomplish their full purpose in his sanctification. God has conditioned his work in us on two things: faith and truth. It is not faith alone, nor truth alone; but faith *and* truth, faith *in* truth, truth apprehended and believed, that is the channel through which alone grace can flow into man's soul and make him a partaker in the divine holiness. Christ not only sanctified himself that his people might be sanctified; but "both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren." No one can be a child of God, or a brother of Christ, or born of the Spirit, who is not sanctified.

All Regenerate Believers Sanctified.—We thus return to the statement with which this chapter began: all justified and regenerate believers are sanctified. This truth is well stated by Dr. J. T. Crane in the following language:

The nomenclature of the Scriptures is shaped on the principle that the soul which is truly born of God is holy, and may through grace continue to be holy: that every believer is from the beginning so indued with gracious power that by steady faith and constant fidelity he is able to master self, defeat Satan, and "keep himself unspotted from the world;" and that those who fail to do this fall below their privilege and their duty. The express language of the Scripture, penned "not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth," proclaims that every one who is born of God becomes that very hour "a new creature," "a new man," "holy," "free from sin," "cleansed," "sanctified," "saved."

In language equally clear and scriptural John Wesley declares the same truth:

His very body is a "temple of the Holy Ghost" and a "habitation of God through the Spirit." He is "created anew in Christ Jesus." He is washed; he is sanctified. His heart is purified by faith; he is "cleansed from the corruption that is in the world." "The love of God is shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto him." As long as he "walketh in love" (which he may always do) he worships God in spirit and in truth. He keepeth the commandments of God, and doeth those things that are pleasing in his sight. . . . And he has power both over outward and inward sin, even from the moment he is justified.

INWARD HOLINESS.

What is our calling's glorious hope
  But inward holiness?
For this to Jesus I look up;
  I calmly wait for this.

I wait till he shall touch me clean,
  Shall life and power impart,
Give me the faith that casts out sin,
  And purifies the heart.

When Jesus makes my heart his home,
  My sin shall all depart;
And lo! he saith: "I quickly come,
  To fill and rule thy heart!"

Be it according to thy word,
  Redeem me from all sin:
My heart would now receive thee, Lord;
  Come in, my Lord, come in!

Charles Wesley.

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XV.

THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT.

"Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, . . . and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." (Rom. v. 1, 2; viii. 15, 16.)

"Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." (Gal. iv. 6.)

"One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." (John ix. 25.)

"Hereby we know that we know him, if we keep his commandments." "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." "And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." (1 John ii. 3; iii. 14, 24; v. 10.)

It is not what we have, but what we know that we have, which determines our material or spiritual wealth. A poor farmer owned a piece of hard rocky land, from which, at the price of only the severest toil, he was able to support his family. He died, and bequeathed his farm to his eldest son. By an accident the son discovered traces of gold on the land, which, being explored, was found to contain mineral wealth of immense value. The father had had precisely the same property which the son now possessed, but, while the one lived and died a poor man, the other became independently rich. And yet the difference between the two depended entirely upon the fact that the son knew what he had, and the father did not know.—*A. J. Gordon.*

Let these go together, the answer of a good conscience toward God and the witness of God's Spirit, and all is well. Our fruits may be the only witness of our piety to others—and sufficient; but for ourselves, let us have a higher and surer evidence. . . . The testimony of our own spirits can never amount to certainty. We may get evidence enough to feel comfortable and proceed with some safety, but must always fall short of certainty. . . . The witness of the Spirit is unlike our own spirit's testimony. It is direct, simple, indubitable, a unit, capable of definition, but incapable of further analysis. God makes the impression on the soul in answer to prayer: "Thy sins are forgiven; arise, go in peace." It is thus an end of controversy.—*Bishop H. N. McTyeire.*

Nothing short of certainty can satisfy, or ought to satisfy, a soul whose eternal destiny is the question in debate. The heart is troubled—yea, tortured—by suspense. The spirit of man cannot rest till the filial cry of "Abba, Father," comes up *spontaneously* from the depths within. And this is just the evidence which the gospel offers; and they who rest short of it enter but slightly into its true genius, and but poorly avail themselves of its provisions.—*Stephen Olin.*

XV.

THE WITNESS OF THE SPIRIT.

Of the doctrines of Christian theology which may be verified by religious experience, none calls for more careful and discriminating study than the witness of the Spirit, or the assurance of faith. Next to justification and regeneration, which together constitute the essence of salvation on the divine side, the witness of the Spirit is the most important element that enters into what we call "experimental religion," a term which Methodism may be said to have introduced into devotional and theological literature. It was the work of Martin Luther to reaffirm and emphasize the all but lost Pauline doctrine of justification by faith only. Wesley took up where Luther left off, and preached with an emphasis hitherto unknown, that, "being justified by faith, *we have peace with God* through our Lord Jesus Christ;" and that there can be no peace with God without a conscious assurance of pardon.

The Direct and Indirect Witness Distinguished.—Mr. Wesley, in his analysis of the doctrine, emphasized both the direct and the indirect witness. The former, which was identified with the witness of the Holy Spirit, he defined as "an inward impression on the souls

of believers, whereby the Spirit of God directly testifies to their spirit that they are the children of God." The indirect witness, or the witness of our own spirits, "is nearly, if not exactly, the same with the testimony of a good conscience toward God, and is the result of reason or reflection on what we feel in our own souls. Strictly speaking, it is a conclusion drawn partly from the Word of God and partly from our own experience. The Word of God says that every one who has the fruit of the Spirit is a child of God. Experience, or inward consciousness, tells me that I have the fruit of the Spirit, and hence I naturally conclude: 'Therefore I am a child of God.'" The two witnesses, he further shows, are never disjoined, but are always united in the normal and ideal experience of a Christian.

The Value of Personal Assurance in Christian Experience and Service.—There is much vagueness and confusion in the minds of professing Christians on this subject; and this vagueness affects and sometimes utterly destroys all real enjoyment of religion, giving to religious experience a constant feeling of unrest, uncertainty, and dissatisfaction. This feeling sometimes amounts to a positive and strong fear in the minds of Church members that they have never been truly converted, and so long as this feeling exists, even if they be truly converted, it robs their Christian life and character of nearly all its power for good. There

is a power in experimental religion that is accompanied by a sure knowledge of sins forgiven which no amount of mere intellectual knowledge can supply. The man who *knows* what conviction of sin is, and repentance, and saving faith, and pardon, and regeneration, and the witness of the Spirit, *because he has experienced them*, has a force and power in his words about them that come not from a mere intellectual study and apprehension of these doctrines. Like the man born blind, whose restoration to sight is recorded in the ninth chapter of John, he can resist the arguments of the skeptical and unbelieving world, and stand immovable on the solid rock of experience, saying: "Whether this or that be true, as you allege, I know not; but *one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.*" Experimental religion, evinced by a conscious knowledge of sins forgiven, is the only satisfactory evidence of conversion, and is the only sure defense against the attacks of an unbelieving world.

Scripture Proof of the Doctrine.—Antecedently, we would expect that the Spirit that convinces us of sin would likewise convince us of its pardon. And this he does, both directly and indirectly, as we learn from numerous passages of Scripture: "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." (Gal. iv. 6.) "For ye have not received the spirit of bondage

again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." (Rom. viii. 15, 16.) "And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." (1 John iii. 24.) "Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit." (1 John iv. 13.) Indeed, these plain Scripture passages seem to teach that it is not simply the privilege but the actual possession of every child of God; so much so that it is abnormal and exceptional for a regenerate believer to be without it. The absence of the witness of the Spirit puts a professing Christian continually on the defensive: he has to defend himself to himself against the ever-present fear that he is not truly converted, and be continually proving to himself, as best he can, that he is indeed, perchance, a child of God. The contrast is very great between such a Christian believer and one who carries with him as an abiding possession the immediate consciousness of his divine sonship and filial love.

The Fact of Personal Salvation, not the Witness of the Spirit, the Subject of Christian Consciousness.—It should be borne in mind that the witness of the Spirit is not an end in itself, but a means to an end. It is a divine conviction of our salvation; and what we are to know and be conscious of is not the witness of the

Spirit, but of being saved. Just as in conviction of sin by the Holy Ghost, what we are conscious of is not the witness of the Spirit, but sin; so in conviction of salvation by the Holy Ghost, what we are conscious of is not so much the witness of the Spirit as the fact that we are saved; not so much the testimony, or the Testifier, as the thing testified. No one can know that he is born again except he be convinced thereof by the Holy Ghost. Many seem to fix their thoughts and prayers on the witness of the Spirit, as if it were a thing to be sought in itself and for itself, like pardon and regeneration. But not so; the thing that we are seeking to be convinced of, to know, is that we are truly born again; and the office of the Holy Ghost is to witness, testify, prove, convince us of, this fact. To be convinced of our salvation is *prima facie* evidence that we have the witness of the Spirit. The witness of the Spirit to the awakened sinner is conviction of sin; the witness of the Spirit to the regenerate believer is conviction of salvation. "Do you believe that you are saved from sin?" asked a pastor of one of his members. "Yes," replied the humble disciple; "I feel sure of that." "Have you the witness of the Spirit?" he further asked; and the member replied, "No, I fear that I have not the witness of the Spirit, and am much troubled because I have not; but I am praying and trusting that I may receive it." What confusion! How can

he feel sure that he is saved, and yet be without the witness of the Spirit? We are persuaded that many Christian people have trouble and confusion in their religious experience at this point because they vaguely seek to know and become conscious of "the witness of the Spirit," when what they should seek to know and become assured of is the fact of their salvation, their pardon and regeneration, being convinced thereof by the testimony of the Holy Spirit. The knowledge of sins forgiven is the conscious effect in us of the witness of the Spirit. It is the divine seal which the Spirit gives to his own work deeply and divinely wrought in us.

Biblical Tokens of Assurance.—The Bible indicates several tokens whereby we may know that our sins are pardoned and that we are the children of God, and that professing Christian has indeed just cause for discouragement in regard to his state who cannot consciously appropriate some of these to himself. From the standpoint of faith, it is called the assurance of faith, and the faith mark is: "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself" (1 John v. 10); and, "I know whom I have believed" (2 Tim. i. 12). The love mark is: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." (1 John iii. 14.) The obedience mark is: "Hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments." (1 John ii. 3.) Not words,

but deeds, give assurance of sonship: "Let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth. And hereby we know that we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts before him." (1 John iii. 18, 19.) It may be tested by the change that has taken place: "One thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." (John ix. 25.) Again, by contrasting our state with that of the world: "And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness." (1 John v. 19.) The enmity of the carnal mind gives place to a sweet and blessed peace that follows pardon: "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, . . . and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." (Rom. v. 1, 2.) Again, "By their fruits ye shall know them;" "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance." (Gal. v. 22.)

Different Modes of Attaining Full Assurance.—We have here eight tests given whereby to determine whether or not we are regenerate believers, nor are these all that may be gathered from the Holy Scriptures. Do none of these bring comfort? If neither by his faith, nor by his love, nor obedience, nor benevolence, nor sense of reconciliation and peace; nor by the change that has taken place in himself or in his feelings for God and his people, nor by the su-

preme motive and purpose and aspiration of his heart, nor the fruits of his life—if by none of these marks he can prove himself to be a Christian, if his faith can take hold of none of these things and reach *assurance* of sonship, then the professing Christian has indeed just ground for fearing that he has never been truly converted. But if any of these things bring comfort to the discouraged believer, *let him hold fast to that*, and make much of it, and build up from that to the *full assurance* of faith. Let him not, especially if he be but a babe in Christ, worry over the fact that all of these marks do not seem to meet in and apply equally to his own individual case. Individuals are very different, both in their temperaments and also in their habits and lives previous to conversion. Hence not only have conviction of sin and conversion from sin very different marks and accompaniments in different individuals, but the same is true as to the mode whereby different individuals attain unto assurance of salvation. No man can know that he is a Christian except he be convinced thereof by the Holy Ghost, but the one and selfsame Spirit of God works in many different ways. While it is true that a genuine religious experience is the best preparation for guiding souls from sin to salvation, it is also true that he is a narrow Christian, and but poorly fitted to guide souls out of darkness into light and peace, who thinks and insists that every Christian's experience, in order to

be genuine and scriptural, must correspond exactly with his own.

The Witness of the Spirit Distinguished from Mere Feeling in Religious Experience.—It is a very common and hurtful error to confound the witness of the Spirit with that emotional outburst of pious joy that often accompanies or follows conversion and with those occasional ecstatic experiences which some Christians more or less frequently enjoy. Happy the Christian who has these. But while they may accompany the witness of the Spirit, they are to be distinguished from it. They are more or less dependent on temperament, and characterize different Christians in very different degrees; but the witness of the Spirit belongs alike to Christians of all temperaments. These ecstatic experiences are occasional; they come and go. But the witness of the Spirit, rightly understood, does not "come and go;" it is permanent, and abides in trouble as in joy, in darkness as in the light. The Christian who has but little feeling, and yet serves God steadfastly and faithfully from principle, may and should have the quiet and abiding assurance that he is a child of God no less than his fellow-Christian whose heart and temperament are such that he often "bubbles over" with fervent and pious emotions. And even the latter type of Christian is liable to feel and fear, when his ecstatic feelings are for the time being gone, that he has

therefore lost the witness of the Spirit. This is by no means necessarily the case, and he who carefully makes the distinction which we have here pointed out may thereby be saved much needless mental worry over his spiritual condition.

Is the Witness of the Spirit Essential to Personal Salvation?—Can one be a regenerate believer, and not have the witness of the Spirit? We answer: (1) It is exceptional, abnormal, and unnatural for such to be the case; and perhaps it does not often occur that one becomes a truly regenerate believer and long continues such without the witness. (2) The Holy Spirit testifies "with our spirit," and not independently of it. While it is the voice of the Holy Spirit to the human spirit that produces alike conviction of sin and conviction of salvation, yet the conscious recognition of this divine testimony seems to be in both cases, to some extent at least, subject to and controlled by the free spirit of man. The reason, therefore, why one man seems to be more sensibly convinced of sin or of salvation, as the case may be, than another is often due not so much to differences in the work of the Holy Spirit as to differences in the free individual spirits of men. (3) But while faith is of the essence of salvation, the assurance of faith, or the witness of the Spirit, is not. The Bible says that if we believe not we must be damned, but it does not say that if we have not the

assurance of faith we must be lost. It says that unless we are born again we cannot enter the kingdom of God, but it nowhere says that unless we have the witness of the Spirit convincing us of our regeneration we are therefore necessarily lost. We have occasionally heard ministers of the gospel say from the pulpit that the professing Christian who did not know that he was a regenerate child of God, and could not tell the exact time and place of his conversion, not only had no right to think himself a Christian, but was certainly an unregenerate sinner, and had never been converted. We believe that such a statement as this is not only untrue in the light of Scripture and of Christian experience, but it is calculated to do much harm, and to discourage from the attainment of assurance those who, by proper instruction and guidance, ought to be helped thereto. In our zeal for a high and holy doctrine we have no right to go beyond the plain teachings of the Bible.

The Witness of the Spirit Sometimes Present but Unrecognized.—Doubtless most regenerate believers who think they have not the witness have it; but, through mistaken ideas, do not recognize it as such. They have antecedently imagined what it is going to be, and *how it is going to feel;* and because their experience does not correspond with their preconceived notions they mournfully conclude that they never had it. Undertake to prove to such a one that he is

not a Christian, and he will prove to you that he is, and thereby manifest his inconsistency in doubting what he proves to be true. He doubts his own conversion, but will not permit you to doubt it. He can produce evidence which will be conclusive to your mind that he is truly a regenerate believer, and yet he will say that he fears he has not the witness of the Spirit. We believe that there are some sincere, but timid and faltering, Christians who have perplexed themselves so much about their having or not having the witness of the Spirit that it would give them absolute and positive comfort to be assured that it is possible for one to be a sincere Christian and yet not have consciously the witness of the Spirit. Mr. Wesley taught so much. He called them "servants" as distinct from "sons" of God. It is interesting to note that at the end of Mr. Wesley's third sermon on the witness of the Spirit he inserted the following note: "It may easily be observed that the preceding discourse describes the experience of those that are *strong* in faith; but hereby those that are *weak* in faith may be discouraged, to prevent which the following discourse [on sin in believers] may be of use."

Three Types of Christian Experience.—Church members may be divided into three classes as regards the witness of the Spirit: Those who have and rejoice in the assurance of present acceptance with God; those

who have it not, and yet its absence gives them no special concern; and, thirdly, those who, not having it, or at least not recognizing it if they have it, are spiritually troubled, and are yearning after it and seeking it with prayer. It is doubtful whether the second class are entitled to recognition as real Christians; but in the third class will be found many devout and useful members of the Church, whom it is the privilege of faithful pastors, both in the private and public ministry of the word, to help and guide into the full assurance of faith.

The Blessedness of Personal Assurance.—The language of Christian experience is the language of knowledge, not of doubt and uncertainty. "I do not know" is the language of skepticism and agnosticism; "I know" is the language of Christian faith and of heaven-born assurance. "I *know* that my Redeemer liveth." "I *know* that I have passed from darkness to light." "I *know* that, whereas I was blind, now I see." "I *know* whom I have believed." "We *know* that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." To have this *witness in himself* is not only the privilege but the duty of every child of God from the very moment of his conversion. Not till then will he have peace with God or power with men.

The Witness to Be Tested by Scripture.—The First Epistle of St. John has been called the "Epistle of assurance." "These things have I written unto you that believe," says the apostle in the closing chapter, in order "that ye may know that ye have eternal life;" and a careful study of the Epistle will verify the accuracy of this statement on the part of the author. The Epistle abounds in "assurances" to the Christian believer, many different expressions of great suggestiveness being used. Every one who lacks Christian assurance should make a special study of this Epistle. And it is also well for every one who has a sense of assurance to test its scripturalness by this Epistle and other New Testament writings. Few things are more harmful to the cause of religion than high claims of sanctity and high professions of assurance that are not justified both by the way one lives and by the Word of God. "Believe not every spirit, but try the spirits" is a divine injunction that is designed to prevent any one from mistaking a false witness for the true witness. Any supposed "witness of the Spirit" that cannot stand this double test, fidelity to the Word of God and consistency of Christian life, cannot, we may be sure, come from Christ. But when the testimony of Christian experience is thus doubly confirmed, it becomes not only a ground of assurance to the individual believer, but he in turn becomes an "epistle known and read of all men."

THE WITNESS OF ADOPTION.

How can a sinner know
  His sins on earth forgiven?
How can my gracious Saviour show
  My name inscribed in heaven?
What we have felt and seen,
  With confidence we tell;
And publish to the sons of men
  The signs infallible.

We who in Christ believe
  That he for us hath died,
We all his unknown peace receive,
  And feel his blood applied.
We by his Spirit prove,
  And know the things of God,
The things which freely of his love
  He hath on us bestowed.

His Spirit us he gave,
  Who dwells in us, we know:
The witness in ourselves we have,
  And all its fruits we show.
Our nature's turned, our mind
  Transformed in all its powers;
And both the witnesses are joined,
  The Spirit of God with ours.

Whate'er our pard'ning Lord
  Commands, we gladly do;
And, guided by his sacred word,
  We all his steps pursue.
Exults our rising soul,
  Disburdened of her load,
And swells unutterably full
  Of glory and of God.

Charles Wesley.

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XVI.

SPIRITUAL LIFE: THE UNITY OF SALVATION.

"He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." "It is the Spirit that quickeneth. . . . The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." "These are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name." (John iii. 36; vi. 63; x. 10; xx. 31.)

"Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." (Acts xi. 18.)

"For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. . . . The Spirit is life because of righteousness." (Rom. viii. 2, 10.)

"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Gal. ii. 20.)

"Heirs together of the grace of life." (1 Pet. iii. 7.)

"He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life." (1 John v. 12.)

Thou seemest human and divine,
The highest, holiest manhood, Thou;
Our wills are ours we know not how;
Our wills are ours to make them Thine.—*Tennyson.*

The different graces, such as love, faith, meekness, kindness, etc., are but different manifestations of one and the same principle of goodness. Not that justice and benevolence are the same sentiment or disposition, for they are distinct; but the same principle which makes a man just will make him benevolent. Religion, or the principle of divine life, prompts to all kinds of excellence; and, in itself, as much to one as to another; just as the principle of life in plants and animals and in the rational soul leads to a harmonious development of the whole in all its parts. Reverence, love, submission, justice, benevolence, are but different exercises of one and the same principle of holiness. The Scriptures give special prominence to the love of God as the most comprehensive and important of all the manifestations of this inward spiritual life. True religion, as we find it described in the Bible, is neither an external show nor a fitful ebullition of feeling. It is an abiding, spontaneous, and progressive principle of spiritual life, influencing the whole man and producing all the fruits of righteousness. This divine life flows from our union with Christ, who causes his Holy Spirit to dwell in all his members.—*Charles Hodge.*

I, the Peace that passeth knowledge,
Dwell amid the daily strife;
I, the Bread of heaven, am broken
In the sacrament of life.

Henry Van Dyke.

XVI.

SPIRITUAL LIFE: THE UNITY OF SALVATION.

We have now reached a point in our analytical treatment of personal salvation where we must pause in order to guard against an utterly false impression that is liable to be made by this method of treating the work of divine grace in bringing a sinful soul to spiritual life. It is possible to draw an inference from the various doctrines which have been presented which might seem to be logically true while at the same time it is really untrue. An utterly false conception of the true nature of personal religion might very naturally be drawn from the analysis which we have here given of the different elements that enter into personal salvation. We must now drop this method of treatment. Analysis must give place to synthesis; and our synthesis must join together again that which our analysis has put asunder.

Excessive Analysis a Source of Confusion in Theology.—Analysis is destructive of life. The dissecting room is a necessity if the demonstrator of anatomy would explain clearly to the student of medicine the constitution of the human body. To get a clear and true idea of the heart or liver or lungs, it is necessa-

ry to sever each of these organs in turn from all others, and examine it singly and detached. But dissection means death. The most perfect bodily organ conceivable is worthless and lifeless if separated from other organs of the body. Not only is it true that all vital organs of the body are necessary to physical life, but it is also true that these organs must be united in one composite whole, forbidding separation and demarcation, or there can be no life. The same is more or less true with regard to spiritual life in its relation to the various elements which enter into personal salvation. These elements have been defined as conviction of sin, repentance, faith, justification, regeneration, sanctification, and the witness of the Spirit. To give a clear idea of personal salvation, the theologian is under the necessity not only of distinguishing from each other the various elements that enter therein, but of separating them and magnifying them as separate in a way and to a degree that is untrue to life. Personal salvation is not so much a complex thing or a compound thing, or many things, as it is one thing. Spiritual life manifests itself in many ways, but it is essentially in itself a unit.

The Conservation of Energy and Correlation of Forces in Spiritual Religion.—Not diversity, but unity, therefore, is the great law, the fundamental principle, of spiritual life. There is a doctrine in the physical

sciences known as the conservation of energy and correlation of forces. It is that there is but one energy or force in the material universe, though this force may and does take many different forms, such as heat, motion, light, steam, electricity, etc. This doctrine is none the less true when applied to the realm of spiritual life. Pure, genuine, experimental religion—spiritual life—that is the one abiding and persistent energy or force which is divinely implanted within the heart of God's children; and it may be correlated or transformed into anything and everything that is described in the Bible as belonging to the character of a true Christian. We may call it love or meekness or humility or unselfishness or benevolence or beneficence or sacrifice or suffering, or whatsoever else belongs to the Christian character. Personal religion is not made up of all these things by a process of addition or multiplication; it is rather one thing; it is spiritual life, manifesting itself in these ways, and not in these ways alone, but in every conceivable way that love and duty can prompt, or that circumstances suggest as fitting. Spiritual religion does not consist in mere conformity to a certain set of rules; it is a deeply and divinely implanted principle. Spiritual life is spiritual power, and the perpetual conservation of this power and its ceaseless correlation into love or service or sacrifice, or whatsoever else belongs to Christian character and duty, is the unfailing evi-

dence of abiding and increasing life. Let us test the truth of this principle by the law of love and love as law.

Christian Experiences and Duties Expressed in Terms of Love.—"Love is the fulfilling of the law," says St. Paul. And yet how different are love and law! In a sense they are the very opposites of each other. How can the one become the other? An Old Testament prophet had defined the true Israelite as one who has the law, the law of duty to God and man, *inside the heart*, as distinct from him who obeys the law only because he is under external compulsion to do so. But in this statement by Paul, and another by Christ, we have the principle of law and love still more clearly expressed. They teach that the loving heart can be trusted to do the right thing. Love will make no intentional and hurtful mistakes in interpreting and applying the law. It will not only do all that the law requires, but "love supplements all codes." In love—love to God and love to man—all that is in the law and the prophets concerning redeemed man finds its unity. Hence love is but another name for personal religion, for spiritual life; it is the one spiritual force within the regenerate soul that may be correlated into all things that are Christlike. Everything that belongs to Christian experience or Christian duty may be expressed in terms of love. Let us see if this is not a true principle. Repentance is but love abhorring sin and forsaking the world; faith is

love embracing Christ; righteousness is love keeping the law; sonship is love doing the Father's will; assurance is love rejoicing in the light; holiness is love dwelling with God; charity is love thinking no evil. In three short and familiar verses (1 Cor. xiii. 4–7) St. Paul gives us a remarkable analysis of the ethical and spiritual contents of love. It is a kind of spectrum analysis. "You have seen a man of science take a beam of light," says the late Henry Drummond, whose words we here condense as they came from his gifted pen, "and pass it through a crystal prism, and you have seen it come out on the other side broken up into its component colors—red, blue, yellow, violet, orange, and all the colors of the rainbow. So St. Paul passes *love* through the translucent prism of his inspired intellect, and it comes out on the other side broken up into its elements. And observe what these elements are. They are virtues which we hear about every day, things which can be practiced by every man in every place in life. Paul's spectrum of love reveals these nine ingredients: patience, kindness, generosity, humility, courtesy, unselfishness, good temper, guilelessness, sincerity—these make up the supreme gift, the stature of the perfect man."

Personal Religion not a Complex or a Compound Thing, but an Indivisible Unit.—We have presented repentance, faith, justification, regeneration, assurance, sanctification, as if they were so many suc-

cessive steps in the way of life, or as so many entirely distinct and separate elements in personal salvation; but we must now in a sense destroy this too nice and too logical analysis by declaring that this method of presenting the new life in Christ is more or less misleading and untrue to Scripture. Personal salvation is divinely imparted spiritual life, and this, as we have seen, is an indivisible unit, not a compound of many things. Repentance, faith, righteousness, sonship, holiness, are not so much different things which together constitute salvation, as they are different ways of looking at or setting forth the one and selfsame thing — spiritual life. If it be true, therefore, that the Bible warrants the foregoing analysis of salvation into distinct and separate elements, it is also true that the Bible in many places utterly ignores its own distinctions, and speaks now of repentance as if it were the whole of salvation, and now again of faith as if it were the whole of salvation, and now again of righteousness or regeneration or holiness as if they were severally the essence of salvation. This should warn us against making overnice refinements in doctrine and being too confident and dogmatic in our distinctions and definitions of the elements of salvation. But so important is this point in its bearing on the definition of Christian doctrine that we must prove it true by a number of references to the Scriptures.

The Realization of the Exceeding Sinfulness of Sin a Manifestation of Spiritual Life.—First among the preliminaries of personal salvation we placed conviction of sin, that profound realization of sinfulness and the guilt of sin which the Holy Spirit works in the conscience and heart of the awakened sinner. And yet no sinner, antecedent to his conversion, ever realizes half so deeply the exceeding guilt and sinfulness of sin as does the truly regenerate and holy soul. The holier the child of God becomes, the more keenly does he discern sin in himself, in his thoughts and feelings, and the more profoundly does he realize in his consciousness the exceeding guilt and sinfulness of sin. Hence "conviction of sin" belongs not to awakened and unconverted sinners alone, but in an important sense it characterizes the regenerate and finds its most perfect expression as an experience in those who have least of sin and most of holiness in them. It was Job, "one that feared God, and eschewed evil," whom his Maker pronounced "perfect and upright," who exclaimed in deep realization of his sinfulness: "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth." It was the saintly and seraphic Isaiah, whose conviction of sin surpassed that of all others which finds expression in the Old Testament, who exclaimed: "Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips." It was the apostle Peter who "fell down

at Jesus's knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." One of the surest tokens, therefore, of the abiding presence of spiritual life in the soul is the quickness to discern sin, and a profound realization of its sinfulness and guilt, and a holy abhorrence of its presence.

Repentance as an Expression of Spiritual Life.—In like manner repentance, which consists of godly sorrow for sin and the forsaking of sin, is no less descriptive of the abiding attitude of those who are saved toward all past sins than it is a condition of the sinner's salvation in the first instance. Indeed, the only true and perfect penitent is the man that is saved. Spiritual life manifests itself as perpetual penitence. The general confession made for all Christians desiring to partake of the Lord's Supper says of past sins: "The remembrance of them is grievous unto us." The vow of repentance and faith is not simply a condition of admittance into the Church; it is the abiding condition of worthily continuing therein. The question as to whether a man is a Christian or not has not so much reference to his having once definitely repented of his sins in the past as to his present repentance and his perpetual turning away from all sin. "For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit,

to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones." (Isa. lvii. 15.) "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." (Isa. lxvi. 2.) "If I justify myself, mine own mouth shall condemn me: if I say, I am perfect, it shall also prove me perverse." (Job ix. 20.) "And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." (Luke xviii. 13, 14.) These passages show that perpetual penitence is the abiding principle of spiritual life. Paul's penitence and sorrow for sin was as deep and abiding as his humility: "I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God."

Faith as an Expression of Spiritual Life.—We have treated faith as the one supreme condition of salvation, but that is not half the truth concerning faith. It is the one supreme and abiding law of the new life in Christ. Its work is just begun when it introduces the penitent to Christ as his Saviour. In that moment saving faith is really born, and from that moment it grows stronger, clearer, fuller, as the Chris-

tian life advances. To attain salvation is to attain faith; faith is but another name for salvation. Faith is that which unites the branch to the Vine, and this is not in the first instance only, but it is that which keeps the two united. "Believers" and "the saved" are synonymous terms. Hence faith is not so much a condition or a step or an element in personal salvation as it is salvation itself. Spiritual life is union with Christ, it is Christ in us, it is that faith which unites us with Christ and preserves the holy union. "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life." "He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son hath not life." Saving faith in Christ is but another name for spiritual life. In the correlation of spiritual forces they are the same.

Righteousness as an Expression of Spiritual Life.—Justification, or Christian righteousness, is, as we have defined it, that declaratory act of God by which he pardons all our sins; but these terms, as used in the Bible, quite as often refer simply to personal religion, to the spiritual life possessed by the believer, without any reference to its technical meaning in Christian theology. Hence it is quite true to Scripture to say that personal religion is Christian righteousness. Christ is called "the Lord our Righteousness," "who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness." "And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, . . . but that which

is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith." "Being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Hence Christian righteousness, or justification, is not so much an element of salvation as it is salvation itself.

Sonship as an Expression of Spiritual Life.—The same is true of regeneration, or Christian sonship. The act by which we are made sons of God, important as it may be in an analysis of personal salvation, recedes into the past tense and loses its importance in comparison with that present and abiding possession of spiritual life which makes us sons of God. Hence regeneration, or Christian sonship, is not to be regarded as merely a step toward, or a part of, salvation; it is salvation itself, as the following Scripture passages will prove: "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you." (1 John ii. 27.) "The water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." (John iv. 14.) "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." (2 Cor. v. 17.) "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." (Rom. viii. 14.) "Beloved, now are we the sons of God." (1 John iii. 2.) "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." (Gal. iv. 6.) Is that act by which God breaks the dominion of sin all that

is referred to in these passages? Nay; it is but a small part of it. It is rather the one-whole life in Christ which is here designated as a divine sonship.

Holiness as an Expression of Spiritual Life.—And so of the terms "holiness" and "sanctification." Although these terms are used in theology to refer to a distinct work of grace subsequent to conversion (either progressive or instantaneous), by which the regenerate believer is "saved from all sin" and made "perfect in love," they are rarely ever so used in the Bible. The "saints" and the body of "believers" are one and the same in St. Paul's Epistles. Holiness is not so much an element of salvation, or a special experience of some of the saved, as it is religion itself; it is but another designation of personal salvation, which, though manifold, is yet a unit. "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Cor. vi. 11.) "Both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one." (Heb. ii. 11.) "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. . . . By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." (Heb. x. 10–14.) "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or

any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish." (Eph. v. 25–27.) God's nature is holiness, and what better definition of personal religion can there be than to designate it as "partaking of the divine nature?"

Biblical and Theological Uses of Terms to be Distinguished. These and other passages that might be quoted warn us against attaching to Bible terms a post-biblical meaning, especially that meaning which technical theology, with its nice refinements and dogmatic distinctions, has assigned to such terms. Scripture writers, in using the various terms which have now come to designate great doctrines, by no means observe that accuracy and uniformity of meaning which modern theology seems to demand, and the Christian student needs to be on his guard against reading into a given passage in the Bible a meaning which is derived from technical theology rather than from the Bible itself. It is of the highest importance that we use terms accurately and consistently in interpreting Scripture—that is, in the sense in which the inspired writers use them. But it is also important that we do not give to Scripture words a preciseness and uniformity of doctrinal meaning which plainly do not belong to the Scriptures. If so, the Bible will surely be made to teach what it does not teach. However many terms and figures the Bible may employ to teach the doctrine of salvation,

we must not lose sight of the fact that personal religion is not a complex or a compound thing, but a unit; it is spiritual life; and repentance, faith, righteousness, sonship, holiness, love, are but so many ways in which this divinely begotten life of God in the soul manifests itself in a world of fallen but redeemed sinners. The life that is hid with Christ in God is one of infinite fullness, and this because it is "Christ in us." This spiritual life, possessed by every true believer, while perfect in kind, yet admits of perpetual increase, and this not only while embodied in the flesh, but doubtless forever. And inspiration has no nobler and better term with which to describe the future state of believers than this: it is life—eternal life. But not to the future state alone does this "life eternal" pertain; it is the present possession of every believer. Our Lord declared repeatedly, "He that believeth on me *hath* everlasting life"—not will have it hereafter when he dies, but has it now. To him who already has eternal life, death is but an incident along the way. St. John in closing his Gospel told us that he wrote the things therein recorded that men might believe in Christ, and that by believing they might have "life." But later, when he came to close his last message (the First Epistle), he said: "These things have I written unto you that believe, . . . that ye may *know* that ye have *eternal* life." This is Inspiration's last word to the believer.

THE SPIRIT'S LAW OF LIFE.

That blessed law of thine,
Jesus, to me impart;
The Spirit's law of life divine,
O write it in my heart!

Implant it deep within,
Whence it may ne'er remove:
The law of liberty from sin,
The perfect law of love.

Thy nature be my law,
Thy spotless sanctity;
And sweetly every moment draw
My happy soul to thee.

The thing my God doth hate,
That I no more may do;
Thy creature, Lord, again create,
And all my soul renew.

My soul shall then, like thine,
Abhor the thing unclean,
And, sanctified by love divine,
Forever cease from sin.

Charles Wesley

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XVII.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH.

"First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." (Mark iv. 28.)

"He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am appprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." (Phil. i. 6; iii. 12-14.)

"And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: to the end he may stablish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God." (1 Thess. iii. 12, 13.)

"And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity." "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. i. 5-7; iii. 18.)

Thorwaldsen, it is said, on the completion of his finest work, surveyed it with a feeling of sadness from the very fact that it satisfied him. That exquisite genius, that severe critic of himself, could see nothing to be improved, and he interpreted the fact as a token that his talent had reached its culmination, and that henceforth the fires of inspiration would begin to grow pale. Doubtless there is a secret, providential reason for the fact that your ideal still eludes your grasp. Faith and hope must have a *distant* goal, or fall asleep in bowers of ease and self-sufficiency.—*J. Spencer Kennard.*

Every man must grow as trees grow, downward and upward at once. The visible outward growth must be accompanied by an invisible inward growth.—*Richard Baxter.*

To this touchstone let us bring all claims to higher holiness. They who are perfect are most conscious of imperfection, and most eager in their efforts after a further progress in the knowledge, love, and likeness of God in Christ.—*Alexander Maclaren.*

Life is not an idle ore,
But iron dug from central gloom,
And heated hot with burning fears,
And dipt in baths of hissing tears,
And battered with the shocks of doom,
To shape and use.—*Tennyson.*

XVII.

SPIRITUAL GROWTH.

Regeneration, or the new birth, has been well defined as "the final and decisive work wrought in the spirit and moral nature of man when the perfect principle of spiritual life in Christ Jesus is imparted by the Holy Ghost." Personal religion is therefore, spiritual life, which, although varied and manifold in its manifestations, is in itself essentially a unit and incapable of being divided into parts. Life, in the first instance, can come only by creation or by birth, not by growth; but, having come, the deepest law of its existence and continuance is that of growth. In like manner spiritual life is attained only by spiritual birth or a divine creation, never by spiritual growth; but having been once divinely originated, the one supreme and essential law of its continued existence is spiritual growth.

Growth the Abiding Law of Spiritual Life.—Wherever life is, there must be activity and growth. When these cease, life virtually ceases. There are in nature, it is true, physical dwarfs and mental idiots that seem to live, but never grow; but these are abnormal and unnatural, and no more have their analogies in the realm of spiritual life than does the

mummy or one born dead. While, therefore, antecedent life is the condition of activity and growth, it is also, in a sense, true that activity and growth are the condition of life, of its continuance and increase. "I am come that they might have life," said Christ, "and that they might have it more abundantly." This continued, ever-increasing, and more abounding life of God in the soul is the essence of spiritual growth.

Spiritual Growth without Termination.—In the natural world we have successively birth, growth, maturity, decay, and death, as the normal and universal law of animal and physical life. In the spiritual world we have birth and growth as characterizing the normal and ideal spiritual life, but here the analogy ceases. There is certainly no decay and death to one who both attains and retains spiritual life. But does not spiritual life and growth lead to and result in maturity? We answer yes or no, according to the meaning attached to this term. Maturity, in so far as it indicates cessation of growth, is strictly applicable only where decay and death are applicable; and as decay and death have no place in the normal and ideal spiritual life, so maturity should never be used of the Christian life in any way to imply that spiritual growth has ceased in any sense. The human mind never acquires knowledge or grows more rapidly than after it becomes "mature." Too often when writers

speak of Christian maturity in its relation to spiritual birth and spiritual growth they confound it with the maturity of a plant or a tree or a physical body, wherein growth and increase cease as soon as maturity is reached. The child of God never reaches such a state. It is quite idle, therefore, to discuss whether the regenerate believer reaches this ideal of maturity instantaneously or by growth, seeing that he never reaches such a state at all. But there are, figuratively speaking, "babes in Christ," who must be fed on milk, and also adults, who can be fed on meat and do the work of full-grown men in the service of the Lord. If we should speak of these last as having attained Christian maturity—and we may do so with propriety—we must never suppose or imply that it is a point or state of Christian experience where spiritual growth ceases and the soul remains simply *statu quo*. The child of God never ceases to grow either in knowledge or in grace; and this is doubtless true not only of this life, but also of the life that is to come. While, therefore, spiritual growth may be more or less rapid according to conditions and circumstances, there must be growth wherever there is healthful spiritual life.

Arrested Spiritual Development.—There is in nature such a thing as "arrested development." Is it also found in the realm of spiritual life? To one who looks abroad at the great body of professing Chris-

tians, it might seem that cases of arrested development are so prevalent as to constitute almost a common experience among professors of religion. Are we to recognize it, then, as a legitimate type of Christian life and experience? By no means. The Christian life knows no "standstill;" it must increase and advance, or retrograde. We should remember, however, that spiritual growth is not something that is visible to the eye. Our work is not, strictly speaking, to grow, but to fulfill certain conditions and perform certain activities and spiritual exercises, in view of which spiritual growth follows as a natural and necessary consequence. If we are living the life and doing the work of a Christian, we are growing, whether we seem to be growing or not. But if "arrested development" in the religious life means that one is not enjoying the experience and living the life and doing the work of a Christian—as it probably does often mean—then there is not only no spiritual growth, but no true spiritual life in the case supposed. "Arrested development," therefore, as a phase of spiritual life belongs more properly under the head of backsliding than under the head of spiritual growth. In Bishop E. R. Hendrix's "Skilled Labor for the Master" is a thoughtful and suggestive paragraph on this subject, which not only defines the disease but suggests the remedy; and, though written primarily for preachers, it is equally good for all Chris-

tians who are watching and praying against whatever would check their spiritual growth:

Arrested development, whether it be mental or spiritual, is alike a disease and a symptom. Bad as it is in itself, it frequently indicates a moral bankruptcy which affects both mind and heart. People are quick to distinguish a religious vocabulary from a religious experience. Their ears can tell the sounding brass and clanging cymbal, even though a man speaks with the tongues of angels. He may have had a genuine religious experience, a very vision of the Lord by the way; and it is fitting to refer to it, as Paul did to his, at the most critical moments of his ministry. But such an experience should be more than a memory; it should be an inspiration. His midday vision quickened Paul's whole intellectual and spiritual life. His brain was soonest fired through his sensibilities. He was never so mighty a thinker as when on his knees. The prayers of Paul contain his theology. Language seems all too inadequate to convey the great truths upon which his own heart has fed while he prays for his own beloved brethren at Ephesus or Colosse. An experience which is not quick and powerful in stimulating a preacher to do his best in feeding the flock of Christ and in winning men to repentance has lost its inspiration even as a memory. Take heed to thyself and to the doctrine, is a fitting apostolic injunction given to the same son in the gospel to whom Paul said: "Let no man despise thy youth; but be thou an ensample to them that believe, in word, in manner of life, in love, in faith, in purity." . . . He not only urges attention to reading, to exhortation, to teaching, but "Be diligent in these things; give thyself wholly to them; that thy progress may be manifest unto all. . . . Continue in these things; for in so doing thou shalt save both thyself and them that hear thee."

Intermittent Religion.—Another type of religious experience that is unfortunately too common among professing Christians may be designated as intermittent religion. It is a question whether it ought to be classed under apostasy or recognized as a possible type of Christian character and experience. It is intensely fervent and spiritual by spells; then again it is marked by lukewarmness and indifference. It is a spasmodic religion. It does not at any time reach the point of sin in outward conduct and life; if so it would be easily recognized and treated as apostasy. It simply loses all enjoyment and sense of personal religion and continues in that state until aroused therefrom by a revival of religion. Indeed, it has become accustomed to periodic revivals, and depends upon them for spiritual awakenings and quickenings, as if ebb and flow were the law of life in personal religion and revivals were a providential agency divinely provided for the periodic quickening of the spiritual life of Christians—as if it was to be taken for granted, as a matter of course, that a uniform and continuous state of religious enjoyment was not to be expected. The tendency of periodic revivals is to develop in some superficial professors of religion this intermittent type of experience and beget in them an undue dependence upon revivals to quicken periodically their religious life and experience. People of this type of experience are usually fickle by nature, and

are frequently of an emotional temperament. What they need is a deepening of their religious life from its very beginnings. Instead of "leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ," they need rather to turn back and do the first work over, or they can never "go on to perfection." They need a deeper conviction of sin, a deeper repentance and turning away from sin, a deeper faith-hold of the atonement, and a deeper work of the Holy Spirit upon the foundations of their moral character. Then alone will they show a uniform and steady growth in the spiritual life.

Variations in Spiritual Life and Growth.—But is all spiritual life alike, and all spiritual growth alike? By no means. The children of God differ at the very beginning of their spiritual life, they differ in their spiritual development and growth, they differ at death, and even beyond death "one star differeth from another." They are all alike in this: that every new life in Christ is divinely begotten of God. If one Christian seems to be less perfect at his regeneration than another, it is because one sinner differs from another in his antecedents and in what he is at the time of his regeneration, and not because God does a less thorough work for one than for another. No theory of the Christian life and of spiritual growth can ignore the fact that truly regenerate men may and do differ at the very beginning of their spir-

itual life, and this primary difference will show itself in their development and growth. A converted "heathen" is by no means transformed by his regeneration into the same being as a converted "Christian," nor is this difference any the less if the former be a "heathen at our own door." Some believers are nobler types of Christian character from the very moment of their spiritual birth than others are after ten—yea, fifty—years of growth.

Spiritual Growth as Affected by Depravity.—All growth is seriously affected by disease, both inherited and contracted. The analogy drawn from a perfectly healthy infant or plant undergoing a perfectly healthful growth from birth to maturity is not altogether so applicable to spiritual birth and spiritual growth as that of one whose growth is affected by inherited disease and the strength of whose inherited disease is greatly augmented by repeated sins against the laws of health ere he places himself in the hands of the skilled physician. In considering the problem of spiritual life and growth we must not ignore the fact that the "newborn" soul is not, like Adam, a being perfectly free from every taint of depravity and sin, but he is a regenerated *fallen* being, in whose nature there is present at the moment of regeneration both inherited and acquired depravity, the effects of which do not wholly disappear at regeneration, but continue to affect in a greater or less degree

his spiritual development. The atonement was provided for these very fallen beings, to make spiritual life and spiritual growth possible for them—yea, eternal life and eternal growth. We have "first the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear;" and this is the *process* of development, whether it be a perfect or an imperfect plant to begin with. This would be the law of growth for an unfallen Adam as long as he should live; and it is the law of growth for a regenerate fallen man, into the problem of whose salvation, both in its beginning and in its progress and at its end, there ever enters the fact that he is a "fallen" being, saved by grace.

Spiritual Growth as Affected by Environment.—Spiritual growth, like all other growth, is seriously affected by environment. According as this is favorable or unfavorable will growth be healthful, symmetrical, and rapid, or otherwise. Nevertheless, environments can never be so adverse but that they may be overcome by the power of a consecrated will and by the aid of the Spirit, and when so overcome they become helps rather than hindrances to growth. Like poverty and discouragement to a youth seeking an education, if he does overcome them, they will become in the highest degree helps to his advancement. The newborn soul who, in the midst of temptations and evil surroundings, withstands all the evil influences and maintains his steadfastness, will develop a

Christian character all the stronger and nobler from the fact that his surroundings were what they were.

Growing Less Sinful and More Holy.—Repentance and conversion are coextensive with conviction—that is, they embrace everything then in sight, both "of sin and righteousness." Whatever the penitent soul at the moment of regeneration sees and recognizes as sinful, he unconditionally forsakes and utterly renounces; and whatever is revealed to him as the truth of God, he accepts by faith. Under the increasing knowledge and light, however, which come to him as his Christian life advances, he discovers sins which he did not before see, sins of omission if not of commission, and he discerns sinfulness, it may be, in thoughts and feelings and acts which before he regarded as innocent and sinless; but if such revelation of existing sin does come to him, he immediately, by the very instincts of his heaven-born soul, repents of, forsakes, and renounces, through the gracious and ever-present help of the Spirit, everything which he thus sees to be sinful. In this sense, then, we may say that the Christian believer grows continually less and less sinful as he grows in grace, in knowledge, in faith, in holiness, and in love. In like manner at conversion, the regenerate believer places himself under obligation to the perfect law of righteousness and holiness: his covenant with God commits him to all that he then

perceives to be righteous and holy. But with increasing light and clearer vision and advancing spiritual life he continually perceives new truth and new lines of activity, higher heights and deeper depths, and as he thus advances he becomes more and more able to comprehend with all saints what is the length and breadth and height and depth of that knowledge, and of the love of God which passeth knowledge; and thus he grows more and more holy and useful as well as less sinful.

Spiritual Growth Conditioned on Devotional Study of the Written Word of God.—The most important condition of spiritual growth is a diligent use of the means of grace. Chief among the divinely appointed means of grace are reading the Scriptures and prayer. To grow spiritually there must be, first, an increase of knowledge, both intellectual and experimental, concerning the things of God, and especially concerning the Bible. There can be no knowledge without study. It is impossible to develop any high ideal of Christian character without a diligent and devotional study of God's Word; and it is because this essential condition of growth is so often wanting that so many professing Christians drag along a sickly existence. Growing Christians are essentially Bible Christians. They can never hope to attain to any high state of saintliness and usefulness who cannot or will not study regularly, earnestly, and lovingly the written Word of God.

Spiritual Growth Conditioned on Prayer.—Prayer, again, is absolutely essential to spiritual growth; but that prayer which alone can enrich and enlarge spiritual life is prayer for spiritual things. It is our privilege to take everything to God in prayer; and if we pray in faith, God will always hear us and answer according as he sees is best for us. But it is what we pray for, rather than how much we pray, that is the real test of spirituality in one who prays. It is possible for one to go often to God in prayer, to pray long and for many things, and yet be a very low type of Christian, provided the burden of his desires and prayers is for things temporal, such as health and wealth and friends and success in matters pertaining purely to this life. The spiritual prayer, the prayer that alone secures spiritual growth, is that of a soul that hungers and thirsts after righteousness, and the burden of which is, whatever else may or may not be included in it, for spiritual blessings, for "the kingdom of God and his righteousness."

Giving as a Condition of Increasing.—Another law of spiritual increase is giving. He alone will grow spiritually who helps others grow, who imparts to others spiritual and, as far as possible, temporal blessings. The law of spiritual biogenesis is that life begets life, and this is true not only of the origin of spiritual life, but also of its increase. Life feeds on life, not on death. He alone can build another up

spiritually who is spiritual himself, and has something spiritual to impart, and actually imparts that something to others. Inanimate things alone abide from age to age as they are; living things are continually giving out and taking in. The human body is perpetually changing its living tissues, and every seven years there is a total change of every particle. Check this process, this essential law of life, even for one day, and death is the result. This law is none the less applicable in the realm of spiritual life. "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth; and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty. The liberal soul shall be made fat: and he that watereth shall be watered also himself." (Prov. xi. 24, 25.) "He that soweth sparingly shall reap also sparingly; and he that soweth bountifully shall reap also bountifully. . . . And God is able to make all grace abound unto you; that ye, having always all sufficiency in everything, may abound unto every good work." (2 Cor. ix. 6–8.) This is a law of widest scope and largest significance. The fountain that is all the time giving, and yet never goes dry, is the symbol of a never-failing life that increases and makes glad all that it touches. The pool that always receives but never gives out anything is the symbol of stagnation and death.

The Possibilities of Holiness Attainable by Spiritual Growth. –That spiritual growth is the supreme law of

Christian life is a doctrine set forth in many passages of Holy Scripture: "But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Pet. iii. 18.) "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Phil. i. 6.) "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, . . . but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, making increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." (Eph. iv. 11–16.) "And besides this, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity." (2 Pet. i. 5.) Paul prays for his Colossian converts that they "might walk worthy of the Lord unto all pleasing, being fruitful in every good work, and increasing in

the knowledge of God" (Col. i. 10); and for those at Thessalonica, "And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men, even as we do toward you: to the end he may stablish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God" (1 Thess. iii. 12, 13). There are no higher heights in Christian experience than those which are represented in these passages of Scripture as possible to every child of God by growth in grace. The grandest conception which inspiration gives of the Christian life is that of its unlimited growth in holiness and love and usefulness, made possible by the grace of Christ and the help of the Spirit.

Unanimity of Faith Concerning Spiritual Growth.—There are some things pertaining to the new life in Christ concerning which Christian believers and Church creeds differ. But there is one point concerning which there is perfect agreement among all Christians—viz., spiritual growth—the necessity, the privilege, the duty, the boundless possibilities through grace, of spiritual growth and development to the regenerate child of God. It behooves us, therefore, to perpetually emphasize this cardinal doctrine of our holy religion, remembering that while Paul may plant and Apollos may water and the believer may study and pray and work, it is God alone that giveth the increase. Growth is not only *in* grace, but it is also *of* grace; and this grace is all-sufficient and con-

templates nothing less than our perfection. "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection." The perfect Christian will take his motto from the noblest of all inspired men, who said of himself when he was ready to be offered and the time of his departure was almost at hand: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after, if that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded." (Phil. iii. 12–15.) This, as we shall further on have occasion to show, is Inspiration's perfect definition of progressive perfection: a sin-forsaking, God-pursuing soul, who, ever conscious of his own imperfection, is yet ever pressing forward toward an ever-advancing goal that keeps ever ahead of him. That is the "high calling of God" to every soul that is in Christ Jesus. The goal keeps ever ahead, not because it is unattainable or unattained, but because every height that is scaled reveals a higher height and a wider horizon. There is no stopping place to him who undertakes the ascent of this mount Zion that is from above.

MORE LOVE TO CHRIST.

More love to thee, O Christ,
More love to thee!
Hear thou the prayer I make,
On bended knee;
This is my earnest plea,
More love, O Christ, to thee,
More love to thee!

Once earthly joy I craved,
Sought peace and rest;
Now thee alone I seek,
Give what is best:
This all my prayer shall be,
More love, O Christ, to thee,
More love to thee!

Let sorrow do its work,
Send grief or pain;
Sweet are thy messengers,
Sweet their refrain,
When they can sing with me,
More love, O Christ, to thee,
More love to thee!

Then shall my latest breath
Whisper thy praise;
This be the parting cry
My heart shall raise,
This still its prayer shall be,
More love, O Christ, to thee,
More love to thee!

Elizabeth Payson Prentiss.

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XVIII.

THE POSSIBILITY OF APOSTASY.

"But when the righteous turn away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die." "When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it." (Ezek. xviii. 23; xxxiii. 13.)

"Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away. . . . I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." (John xv. 2-6.)

"Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know that he which converteth a sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." (Jas. v. 19, 20.)

"If, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them." (2 Pet. ii. 20, 21.)

The chaste and pure who fear to grieve
The gracious Spirit they receive,
  His work distinctly trace;
And, strong in undissembled love,
Boldly assert and clearly prove
  Their hearts his dwelling place.

But ah! if foul and willful sin
Stain and dishonor us within,
  Farewell the joy we knew:
Again the slaves of nature's sway,
In labyrinths of sin we stray,
  Without a guide or clew.—*Madame Guyon.*

This is the penalty of evil deed,
That of new evil it becomes the seed.—*Schiller.*

Arouse thy courage ere it fails and faints,
God props no gospel up with sinking saints.

Langbridge.

Ah! Lord, with trembling I confess,
A gracious soul may fall from grace;
The salt may lose its seas'ning power,
And never, never find it more!

Lest that my fearful case should be,
Each moment knit my soul to thee;
And lead me to the mount above,
Through the low vale of humble love.

Charles Wesley.

XVIII.

THE POSSIBILITY OF APOSTASY.

We could wish that spiritual life and growth, having been once begun, might go on forever, unimpeded by sin and absolutely certain of full and final fruition in heaven. But it is impossible for God to make the believer's final salvation absolutely certain without destroying his moral free agency; and if that be destroyed, man is no longer man. As Principal Fairbairn has pointed out in lines already quoted, if God were to save man and secure him in obedience by his divine, overpowering omnipotence, and not through his own free will, that would not be *saving* man, but destroying him. Something might be saved, but the *man* would be destroyed whenever the self-determining power of his will should be set aside as the law of his life. As, however, the doctrine of the certain and necessary final perseverance of every regenerate believer is held by a large body of Christians as at once the most certain and the most comforting article of their faith, it behooves us to search the Scriptures carefully that we may not reach an erroneous conclusion. Reason and revelation should here as elsewhere agree.

Probation Involves the Possibility of Apostasy.—Is it possible then, we ask, for a justified and regenerate

believer to fall away and be finally lost? That this question is answered in the affirmative by the Scriptures, and that that answer is confirmed by observation and by the experience of thousands who gave, at the time of their conversion and afterwards, every evidence of being truly justified and regenerate Christians, is a proposition which we shall endeavor in the following pages fully to establish. The Scriptures teach very clearly a doctrine of "the perseverance of saints;" not, it is true, an eternally decreed and divinely necessitated perseverance, but rather the necessity of perseverance in order to be saved, without which free and final perseverance no past experience of regeneration will avail for salvation. The regenerate believer is under no necessity nor divine compulsion to persevere in the religious life. He was a self-determining free agent before his conversion; he is none the less a free agent after his conversion. He was free to begin the Christian life or not, as he chose; he is, in the same manner, free to continue this life or not, as he may decide. Man's probation does not end when he becomes a regenerate Christian. There can be no true and consistent doctrine of moral free agency and accountability that does not involve the possibility of apostasy on the part of regenerate believers. It is not only "he that believeth shall be saved," but also "he that endureth to the end shall be saved." Whether a man

shall "endure to the end" depends as much upon his own free will as whether he shall repent and believe in the first instance.

Doctrine of the Necessitated and Final Perseverance of Regenerate Believers Stated.—Calvinistic systems of theology teach that the truly regenerate "can neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace, but shall certainly persevere therein until the end, and be eternally saved. This perseverance of the saints depends not upon their own free will, but upon the immutability of the decree of election. . . . Nevertheless they may . . . fall into grievous sins and for a time continue therein, whereby they incur God's displeasure and grieve his holy Spirit; . . . have their hearts hardened and their consciences wounded, hurt and scandalize others, and bring temporal judgments upon themselves." "No man is able, either of himself or by any grace received in this life, perfectly to keep the commandments of God, but doth daily break them in thought, word, and deed." These quotations are from the Westminster Confession of Faith, and set forth what is known as the doctrine of "the final perseverance of the saints." The doctrine means not so much "once in grace, always in grace," as "once elected, always elect." For, according to this system, the final salvation of the regenerate is just as certain before their regeneration as after, seeing that the one determining fact in their salvation

is their election rather than their regeneration; the latter is a necessary result of the former. Now if the truly regenerate never sinned, the certainty of their final salvation could be easily maintained; and it would seem that, if it is God's love and power that secure the final perseverance and salvation of believers, this love and power would first of all secure their abiding sinlessness and holiness, and then their final salvation could not be called in question. But this is not the claim; indeed, the necessary lifelong sinfulness of the believer, and possible continuance in even grievous and scandalous sins, are freely admitted. Three persons may be converted and possess equally the attributes and marks of the truly regenerate: one abides faithful until death; another falls into grievous sins, but repents and is restored; the third falls into like sins, but continues therein and dies impenitent. The Calvinistic system says of the second that he never fell "totally," and of the last that he was never truly regenerated, and their proof is not that he afterwards grievously sinned, but that he died a sinner. Had he been a regenerate believer, says Calvinism, God would not have suffered him to die in his fallen state. This is an arbitrary "begging of the question:" "If a man once gets religion, he can never lose it; if he loses it, he never had it."

The Scripture Doctrine Stated. – The Scriptures, as interpreted by those who believe in the doctrine of

moral free agency, teach, over against the doctrine just stated, that regenerate believers may both totally and finally fall away from the state of grace, and may continue in this fallen and sinful state until the end and be eternally lost; that the perseverance of the saints in the Christian life depends not upon the immutability of the decree of election, but upon their own free wills. Christians may fall into grievous sins, incur the divine displeasure, grieve the Holy Spirit, forfeit their justification and sonship, and come again into condemnation; and if they die in this sinful and impenitent state, as they may, they will be as inevitably lost as if they had never been regenerated; but they may also repent of their sins and be pardoned and restored to the divine favor, and finally saved. Every truly regenerate Christian is able, not of himself but by the grace of Christ which strengtheneth him, in this life perfectly to keep the commandments of God, and need never break them in thought, word, or deed.

The Divine Pledge of Security to Believers.—There are two truths to be distinguished in connection with the perseverance of the believer: (1) the Christian's absolute security so far as his continuance in the Christian life depends upon God, and (2) the contingency of the believer's final salvation so far as this result depends upon his own free will. If a regenerate believer fails to be ultimately saved, it is never

because God fails to do his part. God's omnipotence is pledged to protect the believer from the power of Satan and sinful men. Neither men nor devils have the power to take the faithful believer out of God's hands. All the powers of heaven are pledged to his protection. As long as the believer is faithful and uses the means divinely provided for his perseverance he is absolutely secure. Without this assurance of divine support and protection no believer would be encouraged and urged to persevere. It is because God works in us both to will and to do that we are encouraged and urged to work out our own salvation. It is impossible to exaggerate the importance and blessedness of this divine pledge of all needful help to secure the faithful believer's perseverance in the Christian life.

Biblical Proof of the Believer's Security.—That God will preserve the *faithful* believer, and that neither men nor devils have the power to make the regenerate prove unfaithful and return to sin, is abundantly shown by the following passages of Scripture: "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and *no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.*" (John x. 28, 29.) "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? . . . I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor princi-

palities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, *shall be able* to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom. viii. 35–39.) "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Phil. i. 6.) "Who are *kept by the power of God through faith* unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Pet. i. 5.) "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is *able to keep* that which I have committed unto him against that day." (2 Tim. i. 12.) Isaiah (xxxiii. 16) says of him that "walketh righteously and speaketh uprightly," that "he shall dwell on high; his place of defense shall be the munitions of rocks: bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure." One of the commentators puts the thought of this verse very impressively thus: "The child of God inhabits a fortress which can never be starved into surrender." These pledges of the divine power and faithfulness are given that "we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." (Heb. vi. 18.) Surely no one can justly suppose that those who maintain that a regenerate believer may fall into sin and be lost believe that such apostasy is due to a lack of fidelity or power on God's part, or to the inability of the believer to resist the

power of Satan. But it is an utter misinterpretation of these passages to make them teach that the believer can never fall or will never fall.

The Determining Cause of Apostasy in the Human and not in the Divine Will.—But while God has pledged his omnipotence to protect and defend the faithful believer, so that neither Satan nor sinful men have power to pluck him out of His hands, so long as he is steadfast and faithful, it becomes an entirely different thing when the believer himself ceases to use the divinely appointed means of grace, and freely decides to yield to temptation. God saves the regenerate believer from others, but not from the power of his own free will. Conversion places the believer, as it were, in an impregnable fortress, in which he is safe with his God; all the battering rams of the world and Satan are not able to force their way into that divinely provided place of safety. But the Christian is not locked within, or, if he is, he holds the key; and if he chooses to turn the key and let in the enemy, or to abandon his place of safety, God's power does not prevent him from so doing. When, therefore, a regenerate believer falls, the explanation and the cause of his fall are not found in God's power proving insufficient to keep him, nor in any irresistible power possessed by his tempters, be they men or devils, but wholly to the fact that he freely decided to yield to temptation, or freely neglected the means by

which alone he was able to resist. The temptations of sinners may be the occasion of the believer's fall, but they are never the cause. This is always found in the free and responsible will of the moral agent.

Old Testament Proof of Possibility of Apostasy.—That a regenerate believer may backslide, fall into sin, and be finally lost, is abundantly shown in the Scriptures: "The Lord is with you, while ye be with him; and if ye seek him, he will be found of you; but if ye forsake him, he will forsake you." (2 Chron. xv. 2.) It is perhaps impossible to state more accurately and fully the doctrine of the possibility of apostasy than is done in Ezekiel xviii. 21–24: "If the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. . . . But when the righteous turns away from his righteousness, and committeth iniquity, and doeth according to all the abominations that the wicked man doeth, shall he live? All his righteousness that he hath done shall not be mentioned: in his trespass that he hath trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned, in them shall he die." Again, Ezekiel xxxiii. 13: "When I shall say to the righteous, that he shall surely live; if he trust to his own righteousness, and commit iniquity, all his righteousness shall not be remembered; but for his iniquity that he hath committed, he shall die for it."

New Testament Proof of Possibility of Apostasy.—The same truth is taught by Christ in the fifteenth chapter of John: "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away. . . . I am the vine, ye are the branches. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much fruit; for without me ye can do nothing. If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." One who had never been united to Christ by saving faith could not be designated as a "branch in me," or as one who "*abides* not" in Christ. "If any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition." (Heb. x. 38, 39.) "But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and hath forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. Wherefore the rather, brethren, give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall." (2 Pet. i. 9, 10.) "If after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them."

(2 Pet. ii. 20, 21.) "Seeing ye know these things before, beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness." (2 Pet. iii. 17.) "Brethren, if *any of you* do err from the truth, and one convert him; let him know that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins." (Jas. v. 19, 20.) Paul recognized it as a possibility that, after preaching the gospel to others, he himself might be a castaway. (1 Cor. ix. 27.) If quotations from Scripture can, by their accuracy, variety, and fullness of expression, establish any doctrine, surely the possibility of a believer's apostasy is proved by the above quotations to be the doctrine set forth in the Word of God.

Biblical Examples of Apostasy.—That there have been numerous examples of believers falling, both totally and finally, is a sad fact which both history and observation confirm. Paul speaks of "holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away, concerning faith have made shipwreck: of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander" (1 Tim. i. 19, 20); and Peter, of those "which have forsaken the right way, and are gone astray, following the way of Balaam the son of Bosor, who loved the wages of unrighteousness" (2 Pet. ii. 15). The examples of Saul (1 Sam. xv. 11), David (2 Sam. xii. 7-14), Solomon

(1 Kings xi. 4–10; Neh. xiii. 26), Peter (Matt. xxvi. 69–75), Judas (Matt. xxvii. 3–5; John xvii. 12), and Demas (Col. iv. 14; Philem. 24; 2 Tim. iv. 10) are recorded for our admonition; some of them teaching us that if we do fall we may yet repent and be saved, and others warning us not to fall, lest we be finally lost. There are, perhaps, few mature Christians who have not known in the range of their acquaintance persons who gave every reasonable evidence of being regenerate Christians, and yet fell into sin and died at length without any reasonable hope of salvation.

Not All Backslidings Real Cases of Apostasy.—Not every one who professes to be a Christian is really a regenerate believer; hence the true explanation why some professors turn speedily back to their life of sin is that they were never truly converted: "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would no doubt have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they were not all of us." (1 John ii. 19.) Nearly every extensive and far-reaching revival of religion gathers into the Church some who are not saved, and hence is followed by some backslidings, which are to be accounted for in this way; but it is not therefore true of every one that falls that he was never truly converted. Some conversions, again, seem to be superficial, and not radi-

cal: "And these are they likewise which are sown on stony ground; who, when they have heard the word, immediately receive it with gladness; and have no root in themselves, and so endure but for a time: afterwards, when affliction or persecution ariseth for the word's sake, immediately they are offended." (Mark iv. 16, 17.)

Apostasy Not an Unpardonable Sin.—Others who fall away are described as "those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the world to come;" and as sinning willfully after they have received the knowledge of the truth, and counting the blood of the covenant wherewith they were sanctified an unholy thing. (Heb. vi. 4, 5; x. 26.) These terms are among the strongest and most expressive of those which are used in the Bible to describe the regenerate state. Backsliders, though in a lost state, may by sincere repentance obtain the divine forgiveness and be restored to the favor of God; and if the fall of any should prove hopeless and their sin unpardonable, it is not because God cannot save them, or will not pardon them *if they repent*, but rather because "it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance"—that is, the responsible cause of unpardonable sin is always in the sinner and not in God. The unpardonable sin can be

committed only by one who has full light in the head and deep hatred in the heart. It is not a sin of ignorance but of knowledge; not a sin of impulse or presumption, but of willful and persistent defiance. Attributing to the devil what one knows to be from God, hating God because of the love of sin, continuing so long in sin that no amount or kind of moral suasion that can be brought to bear upon the will can bring the sinner again unto repentance—these are some of the manifestations and accompaniments of the unpardonable sin. As long as the head continues to let in the light; as long as the heart has any hatred of sin and any love for God; as long as the will is capable of being moved by any Godward motive—we have ground for believing that the unpardonable sin, or, as we might call it, the state of confirmed fixedness in sin, has not yet been reached.

The Expulsive Power of a New and Divine Affection.—It is impossible to empty the heart of earthly love except by filling it with divine love at the same time. The human heart cannot remain empty; it was made to love, and love it will—something. If it is not filled with true love—that is, the love of God and one's fellow-men— it will be filled with a false love, the love of the world and the things of the world. If the newly justified soul is not occupied with deeds of righteousness, it is certain to return to a life of sin and occupy itself with evil deeds, the unfruitful

works of darkness. The Christian religion is under obligation to supply the mind and heart of the new convert with pure thoughts and holy affections that will leave no empty and aching void. Unless the love for worldly and sinful amusements, and other things that are of the earth earthy, can be replaced by a love for purer and holier things, there is but little hope that the forsaking of sin will be permanent. As long as sinful thoughts and feelings and acts are kept out of mind and heart and life simply and only by external prohibitions, the Christian life is resting upon a very insecure foundation, one that is liable to give way at any time. Divine wisdom and a profound appreciation of the philosophy of personal salvation are manifest in the injunction which the inspired man of God gave to the royal sinner of old: "Break off thy sins by righteousness, and thine iniquities by showing mercy to the poor." (Dan. iv. 27.) When deeds of righteousness, mercy, and benevolence take the place of the works of the flesh which once completely occupied the sinner's life, then, and then alone, may we feel fully confident that repentance was genuine, and that the new life in Christ will be permanently maintained. The same profound truth is in like manner at the foundation of the greatest commandment in the law: "Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind,

and thy neighbor as thyself." Only when the love of God and love for God expel all unholy loves from the heart and all sinful deeds from the life, have we just ground for hoping that the child of God will persevere in the Christian life.

The Moral Effect of the Doctrine Ethically Beneficial.—The effect of this doctrine is most wholesome upon all who believe it. The most effective preventive of apostasy is to preach the possibility and danger of it. The most effective way to secure the continued and final perseverance of believers is to teach that they may fall into sin and be finally lost. On the other hand, to preach that a soul once regenerated can never possibly be lost—that assurance of present salvation is virtually assurance of final salvation and that all regenerate believers not only do sin in word, thought, and deed, but may sin even grievously and scandalously without thereby forfeiting their title to the skies—is a doctrine the preaching of which is fraught with untold peril, and it is in itself calculated to lead men into sin rather than make them avoid sin.

"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall," remembering that "God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape." (1 Cor. x. 13.) To be forewarned is to be forearmed. But if one falls like Peter, happy is he if like Peter he repents.

A BACKSLIDER'S PRAYER.

Jesus, let thy pitying eye
Call back a wand'ring sheep;
False to thee, like Peter, I
Would fain, like Peter, weep.
Let me be by grace restored;
On me be all long-suff'ring shown.
Turn and look upon me, Lord,
And break my heart of stone.

Saviour, Prince, enthroned above,
Repentance to impart,
Give me, through thy dying love,
The humble, contrite heart;
Give what I have long implored,
A portion of thy grief unknown;
Turn and look upon me, Lord,
And break my heart of stone.

For thine own compassion's sake,
The gracious wonder show;
Cast my sins behind thy back,
And wash me white as snow.
If thy bowels now are stirred,
If now I do myself bemoan,
Turn and look upon me, Lord,
And break my heart of stone.

See me, Saviour, from above,
Nor suffer me to die;
Life and happiness and love
Drop from thy gracious eye.
Speak the reconciling word,
And let thy mercy melt me down;
Turn and look upon me, Lord,
And break my heart of stone.

Charles Wesley.

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XIX.

SIN IN THE REGENERATE.

UNTENABLE VIEWS.

"And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able. For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you envying, and strife, and divisions, are ye not carnal, and walk as men? For while one saith, I am of Paul; and another, I am of Apollos; are ye not carnal?" (1 Cor. iii. 1–4.)

"For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." (Gal. v. 17.)

Where's that palace whereinto foul things
Sometimes intrude not? Who has a breast so pure
But some uncleanly apprehensions
Keep leets and law days, and in sessions sit
With meditations lawful?

Our remedies oft in ourselves do lie,
Which we ascribe to heaven; the fated sky
Gives us free scope, only doth backward pull
Our slow designs when we ourselves are dull.

Shakespeare.

Nothing is sin, strictly speaking, but a voluntary transgression of a known law of God. Therefore every voluntary breach of the law of love is sin; and nothing else, if we speak properly.—*John Wesley.*

Repentance goes not to work piecemeal in regard to particular deeds which thou hast openly committed against the Ten Commandments, but deals with the whole person, with all his life and character—yea, with the entire nature—and shows to thee that thou liest under God's wrath and art condemned to death until thou forsakest all sin.—*Martin Luther.*

Good men may misunderstand each other, and thereby do each other a wrong; but no true Christian can knowingly and willfully do another a wrong either by word or deed. That was a beautiful Christian spirit which Calvin manifested when Luther wronged and reviled him. "Well," said Calvin, "let Luther hate me and call me a devil a thousand times, yet I will love him and acknowledge him to be a precious servant of God." Truly such an excellent temper, such a sweet composure of soul, as to forgive and forget, to pass by offenses, to leave all to God, not to answer wrath with wrath, not to study revenge, not to be mindful of injuries received, is such as becometh all who bear the name of Christ and have the mind that was in him.

XIX.

SIN IN THE REGENERATE.

UNTENABLE VIEWS.

In the foregoing chapter we have shown how a justified and regenerate believer may by willful and persistent sin incur moral guilt, bring himself again under condemnation, and thus forfeit his divine sonship, and be finally lost. We come now to consider what sin, if any, is left in the child of God, or may be predicable of him, after his conversion, which does not involve a forfeiture of his claim to personal salvation. This is one of the most difficult points for satisfactory treatment in the whole range of Christian doctrine. The conception which one has of this point is vitally connected with his view of justification and regeneration, on the one hand, and entire sanctification, or Christian perfection, on the other. A clear understanding of this point sustains the same vital relation to a true conception of the work of grace in entirely sanctifying and perfecting the soul that a correct diagnosis of a disease sustains to the medical treatment that follows it. There is perhaps no phrase in common use in doctrinal theology that carries with it, to the popular mind at least, more vagueness and uncertainty as to exactly what is meant

than the phrase "sin in believers." We shall endeavor, by careful analysis and accurate discrimination, to determine what the Bible and Christian experience teach on this subject.

The Term "Sin" Defined.—The word "sin" is an ambiguous term which, unless defined clearly, will prove a fruitful source of misunderstanding in this connection. We must briefly restate some points already presented in order to show the necessity for always considering the sense in which an author uses the word before pronouncing upon the correctness or incorrectness of his statements. One man, for instance, says that every regenerate believer is free from all sin; another says that only an "entirely sanctified" believer is free from sin; a third says that neither the one nor the other is free from all sin; and yet it is quite possible that, in spite of their contradictory phraseology, they all believe very much the same thing. The term "sin" includes, as we have seen, many widely different things: actual, voluntary transgressions, inherited depravity, acquired depravity, want of conformity to law, acts of omission and commission, transgressions due to culpable ignorance and thoughtlessness as well as those with full knowledge, thoughts of the mind, feelings of the heart, volitions of the will, inner states and outward acts—all these are designated as sin. To one man only the voluntary transgression of a known law of

God involves sin and guilt; to another, sin means any and all want of conformity to the perfect law and will of God. To the former, the justified believer is entirely free from all sin; to the latter, the justified and regenerate believer is still sinful until "entirely sanctified;" while to a third, perchance, even an "entirely sanctified" believer is still in some sense sinful. In view of this ambiguity it is especially desirable that every writer should so use the term as to leave it clear to the mind of the reader in what sense he employs it.

Sin in the Regenerate Assumed in the Ritual.—Our ritual for the administration of the Lord's Supper recognizes sin as at least common to, if not characteristic of, the general body of Christians who from time to time partake of the holy communion. Thus the invitation to the Lord's Supper is addressed to those "that do truly and earnestly repent of their sins;" and then this general confession is made by the minister in the name of all those who are minded to receive the holy communion:

Almighty God, we acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, which we from time to time most grievously have committed, by thought, word, and deed, against thy divine Majesty, provoking most justly thy wrath and indignation against us. We do earnestly repent, and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us. Have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us, most merciful Father; for thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's

sake forgive us all that is past, and grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please thee in newness of life, to the honor and glory of thy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. . . . Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of thy great mercy hast promised forgiveness of sins to all them that with hearty repentance and true faith turn to thee: have mercy upon us; pardon and deliver us from all our sins, confirm and strengthen us in all goodness, and bring us to everlasting life through Jesus Christ our Lord. . . . Grant us, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of thy dear Son Jesus Christ, and to drink his blood, that our sinful souls and bodies may be made clean by his death, and washed through his most precious blood, and that we may evermore dwell in him and he in us.

These prayers are offered for and in the name of all who participate in the Lord's Supper, which includes all professing Christians present, whether they be truly converted or not, and even "entirely sanctified Christians," if there should be any such present.

The Ninth Article of the Church of England.—The ninth of the thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England reads as follows:

Original sin standeth not in the following of Adam (as the Pelagians do vainly talk), but is the *fault or* corruption of the nature of every man that naturally is engendered of the offspring of Adam, whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, *so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the Spirit, and, therefore, in every person born into the world it deserveth God's wrath and damnation: and this infection of nature doth remain, yea in them that are regenerated, whereby the lust of the flesh,*

called in Greek "phronema sarkos," which some do expound the wisdom, some sensuality, some the affection, some the desire of the flesh, is not subject to the law of God. And though there is no condemnation for them that believe and are baptized, yet the apostle doth confess that concupiscence and lust hath of itself the nature of sin.

This Article not only recognizes sin in the regenerate, but goes further, and pronounces this sin to be moral guilt and deserving of God's wrath and punishment.* Other Calvinistic standards affirm the same doctrine in even stronger terms, if possible.

Sin in the Regenerate Defined.—Among the expressions used to define that sin which is thought by many to characterize regenerate believers are the follow-

* It is a well-known fact that in 1784 John Wesley abridged the thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England for his Societies in America. He omitted fifteen of these Articles entirely, and altered some of those which he retained. One of the most important alterations made by him was to omit entirely from the above Article all that portion which is printed in italics. Before doing this, however, he had published three important treatises that were more or less directly based on the very part which he then omitted. These were a treatise on "Original Sin" in 1757, a notable sermon on "Sin in Believers" in 1763, and another sermon on the "Repentance of Believers" in 1767. These sermons are important not only in showing the connection between the Article in its original form and his view of indwelling sin in the regenerate, but also the connection between indwelling sin and his doctrine of entire and instantaneous sanctification, which he defined as "salvation from *all* sin."

ing: "Inbred sin," "sinful nature," "the being of sin," "the root of sin," "evil thoughts," "evil feelings," "evil tempers," etc. Such sins as the spirit of "resentment," "pride in the heart," undue "self-esteem," "love of the world," "self-will in the heart, even a will contrary to the will of God," "loving the praises of men," "fear of men," "jealousies," "evil surmisings," "envy," "covetousness," "idle words," "uncharitable conversation," and the like, are said to characterize believers who are "merely regenerate." A second work of grace, conditioned like the first (regeneration) on repentance and faith, it is claimed by some, radically and instantaneously removes these sins from the heart, and destroys the "roots of sin" from which they spring. Those who hold this view of sin in the regenerate are in the habit of distinguishing between "salvation from sin" in justification and regeneration and "salvation from *all* sin" in sanctification.* There are

*This distinction was made by John Wesley, but he did not uniformly observe it in his own writings any more than he did the distinction which he made between "sanctification" and "entire sanctification." He frequently, especially in his journal, used the expression "saved from sin" in the sense of "entire sanctification." The various expressions used above to describe what is meant by sin in the regenerate are taken from Mr. Wesley's sermons, mainly from the two entitled "Sin in Believers" and the "Repentance of Believers."

those who refuse to recognize the sins here enumerated as belonging to or predicable of any truly justified and regenerate soul in a normal condition, and yet they still hold that there is that in the regenerate which may not improperly be called "sin;" for example, certain remains of "acquired depravity," sins of omission, etc., which view will be more fully set forth in the next chapter.

The Removal of These Sins from the Regenerate Necessary to Salvation.—If it be true that sin is left in the regenerate after their conversion, and if that residue of sin does include such "sins" as those above enumerated, it is quite evident that a second radical and instantaneous work of grace is as much needed for the full and complete salvation of penitent believers as such a work was needed in the first instance when they were justified and regenerated. This is clearly shown by the following quotation from one of the purest and best of those who have taught that the aforesaid sins do characterize regenerate believers in their normal state:

> By all the grace which is given at justification we cannot extirpate them (that is, the sins which are above described as remaining in the regenerate). Though we watch and pray ever so much, we cannot wholly cleanse either our hearts or our hands. Most sure we cannot until it shall please our Lord to speak to our hearts again, to speak the second time, "Be clean;" and then only the leprosy is cleansed. Then only the evil root, the carnal mind, is destroyed; and inbred

sin subsists no more. But if there be no such second change, if there be no instantaneous deliverance after justification, if there be none but a gradual work of God (and that there is a gradual work none denies), then we must be content, as well as we can, to remain full of sin till death; and if so, we must remain guilty till death, continually deserving punishment. For it is impossible that the guilt or desert of punishment should be removed from us as long as all this sin remains in our hearts and cleaves to our words and actions. Nay, in rigorous justice, all we think and speak and act continually increases it." *

All who believe that the above is a "true bill of indictment" against regenerate believers in their normal condition will doubtless agree with the writer just quoted in thinking a second radical work of divine grace necessary in order to "salvation from *all* sin." We may also add that all who believe in the power of the atonement, as applied by the Holy Spirit, to cleanse from all sin, and in the power of the human will, as aided by divine grace, to exercise a fully saving faith, will doubtless agree that such a second work of saving grace may and should be wrought instantaneously and at the earliest possible moment after regeneration.

* John Wesley's sermon on the "Repentance of Believers," preached from the text, "Repent ye and believe the gospel." (Mark i. 15.) He makes repentance here to be a conviction of and forsaking of that sin that remains in the regenerate, and the belief spoken of he interprets as referring to the sanctifying faith that secures the second work of grace described above.

Evidence of Christian Experience.—Let us now inquire whether it is true that these sins above enumerated do characterize truly regenerate believers, and consider the proof that is advanced to establish that fact. Appeal is made first to the great body of recognized Christian believers in the world, and it is confidently affirmed that they do manifest, in their daily experience and conduct, this very class of sins which is here enumerated. Multitudes who are chargeable with these sins, it is claimed, are recognized as regenerate believers; and if this verdict concerning their moral status be accepted as true, then, it is claimed, no further proof is needed to establish the doctrine of "sin in believers" as here set forth. But many Christians, it must be said, deny the validity of this argument. They affirm that it is impossible to recognize any professing Christians who are chargeable with the above sins, and are in the moral condition described in the foregoing paragraph, as true Christian believers in a normal regenerate state. They affirm that, however much may be said in recognition of the possibility of certain sins characterizing some exceptional and abnormal cases among truly converted men without involving a forfeiture of their divine sonship, yet such cases, if granted to exist, could be treated only as exceptional and abnormal, and could not warrant a doctrine of sin in the regenerate that would be true of all

normal believers. They contend that we have no right to affirm that any man is a truly regenerate Christian who does not measure up to the Bible definition of a justified and regenerate person. The fact that an individual "professes" to be a Christian, or that others "recognize" him as being a Christian, is no proof that he is a real Christian. I may think that such and such a one is a true Christian, but all that I know is that if he measures up to the Bible definition of a justified and regenerate person he is a real Christian; and the biblical definition seems to exclude absolutely the sins and moral guilt above predicated. Such at least is the case, if we have properly defined these two doctrines in the chapters devoted to their consideration.* So much for the appeal to Christian experience. The next appeal is made to the Scriptures. Only a few passages are referred to as proving the doctrine. Of these, we select for careful examination the two which are considered the strongest in favor of the doctrine.

Scripture Basis for Doctrine of Sin in Believers.—The passage of Scripture which is most relied upon to establish the doctrine of sin in believers is 1 Corinthians iii. 1, 3: "And I, brethren, could not speak unto

*See Chapters XII. and XIII., pages 211-252. Let the reader turn especially to pages 189, 221, 243, 244, and reread the paragraphs quoted from John Wesley in definition of saving faith, justification, and regeneration.

you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ. . . . For ye are yet carnal: for whereas there is among you jealousy and strife, are ye not carnal, and walk after the manner of men?" The argument is that this Epistle is addressed to the Church at Corinth, to "them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus;" and that these Christians are here recognized as "babes in Christ," but still "carnal," and what is true of them may be predicated of Christians generally who are "merely regenerate" and not yet "entirely sanctified." It is, however, the opinion of several commentators (among them Dr. Adam Clarke) that this passage does not apply to regenerate Christians, and we think this exegesis the correct one for the following among many reasons:

1. In the Epistles of Paul, the Church collectively is always addressed as "the saints," even though the Church, as here at Corinth, contained unregenerate men in it.

2. In like manner, the Church is addressed and reproved as if it were collectively responsible for offenses of which only a portion of its membership were guilty.

3. The persons alluded to in the passage quoted above are not called "babes in Christ," but he says: "I could not speak unto you except as to *babes* in Christ." The whole emphasis is on "babes," and not on their being "in Christ." Besides "Paul's

'babes in Christ' (νηπίοι) must not be confounded with John's 'little children' (τεκνία, παιδία). John's epithet is one of endearment, while Paul's is a term of reproach; as if he had said in English: 'When you ought in piety to be men, you are only babies.'"

4. He not only spoke unto them "as unto carnal," but he says distinctly, "Ye *are carnal;*" and the proof of it was their "envy, jealousy, and strife," which tempers and conduct are mentioned only to be reproved and condemned as wholly incompatible with the regenerate state. And hence Dr. Clarke interprets the verse thus: "Ye act just as the people of the world, and have no more of the spirit of religion than they."

5. Even if it could be shown that these Christians are recognized as truly regenerate believers, and yet still carnal, it could not prove that all "babes in Christ" are also carnal. It could only prove that some may be carnal.

6. In chapter vi. it is said: "Nay, you yourselves do wrong [ἀδικεῖτε], and defraud, and that your brethren. Know ye not that the unrighteous [ἄδικοι, wrongdoers] shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, . . . nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you; but ye *were* [not *are*—see Revised Version] washed, but ye *were* sanc-

tified, but ye *were* justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (verses 8–11). As to whether Paul regarded these persons whose sins he rebukes and condemns as still regenerate believers, each reader must determine for himself. The incestuous person (chapter v.) certainly cannot be regarded as being in a regenerate state.

7. When St. Paul addresses the Galatian Christians and says, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel; . . . Ye are fallen from grace"—does that warrant any inference as to other Churches being chargeable with the same conduct? When Christ rebuked Peter and said, "Get thee behind me, Satan, . . . for thou savorest not the things that be of God, but the things that be of men"—does that prove that this spirit is one of the things that characterize all "merely regenerate" believers? If the Corinthian Christians and others whose sins are rebuked had so lived (as they should) as never to have been guilty of these sins and called forth the statement that they were carnal and babes, where would be the proof that *all* merely regenerate Christians are carnal? When Paul thus writes to the Church at Corinth and calls them *carnal*, does he not point out something chargeable against *them* and not against other Christians, certainly not against *all Christians?* Surely this is the case.

8. Can it be conceived that Paul might have stated explicitly, and in full, the truths which some theologians represent him as teaching implicitly and inferentially in this passage? If so, he would have expressed himself somewhat thus: "And I, brethren, could not speak unto *you* as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ—and indeed, my brethren, this is true not of you simply, but of *all* merely regenerate Christians; they are as yet but babes in Christ, and therefore I cannot speak unto them as unto spiritual but as unto carnal. For ye are yet carnal—and indeed, my brethren, that is true not of you only but of *all* merely regenerate believers. For whereas there is among you envying and strife and divisions, are ye not carnal and walk as men?—and alas, my brethren, such sins in some form or other are characteristic of all merely regenerate believers." Can we conceive of Paul as writing thus? Surely we cannot. But this is exactly what those who advocate the theory of "sin in believers" under review say is implied and taught here.

9. Again, can we conceive of Paul as injecting another parenthesis thus: "And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual but as unto carnal, as unto babes in Christ. . . . For ye are yet carnal—and indeed ye will and must continue to be carnal so long as ye are merely regenerate believers. Ye must experience another radical work of grace,

a second cleansing; and then ye will cease at once to be babes in Christ, to be carnal, and will become spiritual. Then, and not till then, will envyings, strife, and divisions cease among you, for such things as these are 'sins of believers;' they are characteristic of, and incidental to, your merely regenerate state." Now if it be true that this passage does furnish Scripture proof of such a doctrine of "sin in believers" as that set forth above, then may we consistentently inject into it just such statements as are found above. And if that was the apostle's thought, it is inconceivable that he should have failed to state it.

The True Explanation of the Passage in First Corinthians.—The fact that this First Corinthian Epistle is addressed to "the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ," and that Paul calls them "brethren," has but little bearing on the point at issue. Not all in the Church visible, or in any visible Church, are truly regenerate. Many in the Church at Corinth were doubtless worthy of being thus addressed, and worthy of all that is said in verses 4–9 of the first chapter, but the Epistle shows that many in the Church were wholly unworthy of being thus addressed. It is perfectly consistent in the apostle to address the Church as a whole as "brethren in the Lord," and yet proceed to re-

prove many things in them, which things if examined in detail would not be found to be true of all the members of the Church, but some would be found guilty of one thing only, others of another; while others, it may be, would be guilty of none of the things which are charged against the Church as a whole. The Church in its corporate capacity is chargeable with whatever is allowed to exist and whatever characterizes any of its members, though some of those members may be guilty of sins which prove that they could not be regarded as regenerate Christians at all. Connybeare and Howson enumerate no less than seven distinct offenses which are charged upon the Corinthian Church in this Epistle—upon either one, or a few, or many, or all of its members: "(1) strife and division; (2) living in practical immorality, denying the resurrection and adopting the belief as well as the sensuality of the Epicureans; (3) incest; (4) total want of brotherly love, shown by their defrauding one another in private, bringing vexatious charges against each other in heathen courts; (5) turning their spiritual gifts into occasions of vanity and display, accompanied by fanatical delusion; (6) disorderly public worship; (7) immodesty unbecoming to Christian womanhood; and (8) turning the holy communion into occasions of reveling and debauch. Paul, therefore, in this Epistle, "denounces the sins which had polluted the

Corinthian Church, and almost annulled its right to the name of Christian." In view of this state of affairs it is not easy to see how this Epistle can be appealed to as furnishing any proof of the doctrine under consideration—viz., that the carnal nature remains in the regenerate, and that people who are guilty of envy, strife, and other sins of disposition and temper may yet be regarded as truly justified and regenerate believers. All theologians teach (and none more strongly than John Wesley) that all justified believers are free from divine condemnation. But it is very certain that these "carnal" professors of religion at Corinth are here informed by the inspired apostle, and in the strongest possible terms, that they are under divine condemnation, and unless they repent they cannot inherit the kingdom of God.

Exegesis of Galatians V. 17.—The other passage relied upon to prove the doctrine of "sin in believers" is Galatians v. 17: "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." It is contended here —to use the words of one who holds this view— that "St. Paul is speaking to believers, and describing the state of believers in general when he uses these words. Nothing can be more express. The apostle here directly affirms that the flesh (evil nature) opposes the spirit, even in believers; that even in

the regenerate there are two principles, contrary the one to the other." Now we do not believe that the apostle is "describing the state of believers in general when he uses these words;" but, on the contrary, the state of the unregenerate. It is the unconverted man alone that is so dominated by the carnal nature that he cannot do the things which the Spirit of God convinces him he ought to do, and which he would do. Even if we allow that there are two contrary principles in the regenerate man—and we see no serious objection to allowing this—we must at least insist that the spiritual nature dominates the fleshly nature, and that the regenerate man, under the guidance and help of the Holy Spirit, can and does do the things he would; that he does not bring forth the fruits of the flesh, but he does bring forth the fruits of the Spirit. The entire context both before and after the verse here quoted furnishes all the scripture proof that could be desired to confirm this statement; and we consider it absolutely impossible to reconcile the various sins above enumerated with the child of God whose character is described in this context as one who "walks in the Spirit."

This Passage Inapplicable to Regenerate Christians in a Normal State.— Even if we grant that some sins may be committed by some regenerate believers without an immediate and necessary forfeiture of their status as sons of God, it would not follow that the committing

of such sins pertains to and characterizes believers in general. Such faulty types of regenerate life should be recognized and treated not as normal but as abnormal cases. And even if we should grant, again, that, under certain extenuating circumstances, believers generally may be overtaken in a fault and do that which is wrong, without thereby instantly severing themselves as living branches from the vine—and we shall presently take up this point for more careful consideration—it does not follow from this that the fleshly nature (which is described in Galatians v. 17 as so strong that one "cannot do the things that he would") belongs to regenerate believers as such; for the manifestation or fruits of this fleshly nature are enumerated in the context and pronounced wholly incompatible with the character of a regenerate believer. "Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh. *For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary, the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.* But if ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law. Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, . . . hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revelings, and such like; of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. But the fruit

of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." It seems strange that any one could, with such a context as this before him, affirm that believers in general and in a normal state of regenerate life are chargeable with such sins as were mentioned on the foregoing page, seeing that many of the sins there mentioned are named in this passage only to be condemned as totally irreconcilable with any true claim of one's being a regenerate child of God.

Our conclusion therefore is that the doctrine of sin in the regenerate that is set forth in the Ninth Article of the Church of England is wholly untenable, and the effort to find a Scripture basis for it in the two passages cited is a failure. Even granting that they describe true "babes in Christ" as "carnal" and as manifesting their carnality in strife and other sinful tempers, it is wholly unwarrantable to universalize these passages and say that they prove that the particular sins named characterize all regenerate Christians who are not entirely sanctified. We cannot recognize the many sins enumerated as a true "bill of indictment" against *regenerate* believers; if it is a true bill, then the believers are not *true* believers, certainly not *normal* believers. What, then, is the true view of sin in the regenerate?

LONGING FOR SINLESSNESS.

O that my load of sin were gone!
O that I could at last submit
At Jesus' feet to lay it down,
To lay my soul at Jesus' feet!

Rest for my soul I long to find:
Saviour of all, if mine thou art,
Give me thy meek and lowly mind,
And stamp thine image on my heart.

Break off the yoke of inbred sin,
And fully set my spirit free:
I cannot rest till pure within,
Till I am wholly lost in thee.

Fain would I learn of thee, my God;
Thy light and easy burden prove,
The cross, all stained with hallowed blood,
The labor of thy dying love.

I would, but thou must give the power;
My heart from ev'ry sin release;
Bring near, bring near the joyful hour,
And fill me with thy perfect peace.

Charles Wesley.

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[See also references to Chapters XX.–XXIV.]

XX.

SIN IN THE REGENERATE.

THE TRUE VIEW.

"Our old man is crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." "But thanks be to God, that, whereas ye were servants of sin, . . . being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness." "The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. . . . To be carnally minded is death. . . . But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." (Rom. vi. 6, 16; viii. 2-9.)

"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." "We know that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; but he that is begotten of God keepeth himself, and that wicked one toucheth him not." (1 John iii. 9; v. 18.)

"Pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father is this, . . . to keep himself unspotted from the world." (Jas. i. 27.)

Whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, or takes off the relish of spiritual things; whatever increases the authority of your body over your mind—that thing to you is sin.—*Letter of Susanna Wesley to John Wesley while at college.*

We know that no man can be assured of his salvation while he lives in any sin whatsoever.—*John Wesley.*

He had no sooner taken in the poison than he vomited it up again ere it got to the vitals. So it is if by chance in an unguarded moment a deadly sin gains entrance into the soul of a child of God. Only by repudiating and expelling it instantly can he preserve intact his spiritual life. Romish theology makes an unwarranted distinction between "venial" and "mortal" sins. The former are regarded as excusable and as not involving a forfeiture of spiritual life; the latter alone are unto death. But according to the Scriptures all sin is venial, in that it will be pardoned if it is repented of and forsaken; and, on the other hand, all willful sin is mortal, in that, if it is not repented of and forsaken, it is unto death.

Lord, many times I am aweary quite
Of mine own self, my sin, my vanity;
Yet be not thou (or I am lost outright)
Weary of me.—*Archbishop Trench.*

It is a curious fact that we have from the prophet Daniel one of the fullest confessions of sin anywhere found in the Bible; and yet he is almost the only saint of whom we have any considerable account in the Bible against whose character or conduct there is not the slightest charge of inconsistency or shortcoming. Yet he knew his own need for confession; and it was whilst confessing that the angel was sent to him.—*G. S. Bowes.*

XX.

SIN IN THE REGENERATE.

THE TRUE VIEW.

HAVING pointed out in the preceding chapter what we consider to be unscriptural and untenable views of sin in the regenerate, we desire now to set forth that doctrine which we believe to be in harmony with reason, with normal types of Christian experience, and with a sound exegesis of the Holy Scriptures.

How Much, if Any, Willful Sin Is Compatible with the Justified State?—Does every willful sin, even the least, involve an immediate forfeiture of justification and constitute one a backslider? Does a backslider, upon being restored, need both justification and regeneration as in the first instance? These questions are often asked, and need to be answered at this point. Every willful sin committed by a regenerate believer brings him under divine condemnation, and hence calls for penitence on the part of the transgressor and pardon on the part of God. A regenerate believer will not, of course, commit a deliberate and premeditated sin; if so, he is already fallen from grace, even before the outward sin is committed. But may not a believer be "overtaken in a fault," and commit a sin which, though unpremeditated, is

yet in some degree willful? If so, he will instantly and instinctively repent thereof, and seek the divine forgiveness in so far as he may in any degree have already come under divine condemnation. If a sin, when committed, remains unrepented of, this very fact shows that there is not only guilt calling for pardon, but it shows that the dominion of sin has been reëstablished in his nature. The equilibrium of a vessel may be upset by the winds and the waves for a moment; but if it be sound and safe and seaworthy, it will *instantly* by its own weight resume its normal position. As long as its center of gravity is rightly located, it may be counted on to right itself instantly and resume its normal state of equilibrium whenever untoward outward conditions upset it. So it is with a believer: regeneration has rightly located his moral center of gravity. He will not, as a rule, have a smooth sea on which to sail. The provocations and temptations that beset him on every hand may be fitly likened to a stormy sea, driven by winds and lashed by waves. He may still through grace remain entirely free from sin. But if the regenerate believer is caught, as it were, in a "sin of surprise" or "*overtaken* in a fault," and his spiritual equilibrium is thus upset, he immediately repents and obtains the divine forgiveness, and thus the moral and spiritual gravity of his own regenerate nature at once restores the equilibrium of his re-

ligious life. A vessel half overturned for a moment by wind and waves cannot abide in that condition. If it does not at once resume its normal position, it must assume a contrary position that threatens danger and death. No soul can continue in the guilt of unrepented and unforgiven sin, and *at the same time* retain its status as regenerate and saved. As long as you keep the vessel in the water, all is well; but as soon as the water gets into the vessel, disaster and death are at hand. As long as the Christian believer is in the world simply, there is no sin; but if the world once gets into the Christian's heart, the world of sin, it shows that the center of moral gravity has been transferred below the danger line, and spiritual death is the result. In the light of these explanations and discriminations of thought, we are now prepared to answer the question propounded at the beginning of this paragraph by saying that no willful sin, not even the least, continued in and unrepented of, is compatible with continuance in the justified state.

How Much of Sinfulness Is Compatible with the Regenerate State? — But does not "inbred sin" still "dwell" in the heart of the regenerate? If the plant of sin was torn up at regeneration, were not the "roots of sin" still left? Is that which is left in the nature of the regenerate to be called either "sin" or "sinful?" On the answer to this question

much depends. That a *liability to sin* remains in the regenerate is undeniable; but is this "liability" sinful? A liability to sin existed in Adam; it remains in the "entirely sanctified" even; it belongs to all under probation. One man is more liable to sin than another, but "liability" to sin is not sin. The *strong* liability to sin that characterizes regenerate believers, however, is certainly, in some way or other, closely connected with that which before their regeneration was called the "carnal nature." Is it or is it not a remnant of the carnal nature? Christian theology generally affirms that it is, and therefore calls it sinful. Accurate discrimination is called for here. Many writers will speak of regeneration as breaking the bias toward sin, and will yet say that regenerate believers have a bent toward sin. This is not consistent. A tree cannot lean toward the north and toward the south at one and the same time. A man cannot properly be said to have a "bias" toward sin and a "bias" toward virtue at one and the same time. The regenerate man not only has a liability to sin, but this liability to sin is more or less proportioned to the extent of his sins and depravity previous to his conversion. Of two men recently converted, say at thirty years of age, the one previously moral in his character and habits, and the other long addicted to many evil habits, and desperately wicked, it is unquestionably true that the "liability" of the

latter to return to sin is much greater than that of the former. This shows that what we have here called "liability" in the regenerate is so closely connected with sin that it is a mere question about words as to whether it shall be called sin, or sinfulness, or sinwardness, or depravity. As a matter of fact, Christian theology generally has called it sin, and hence has considered a justified and regenerate believer as still "sinful;" saved indeed, but a "saved *sinner*." For many reasons it could be wished that the same word should not be used to indicate that which involves guilt and also that which has no guilt attached to it. But so it is and has always been in the use of the word "sin."

Acquired Depravity Left after Regeneration.—If the above reasoning be sound, we are brought to quite a different conclusion on this point from that reached by those writers who say that regeneration removes acquired depravity, and that inherited depravity remains until taken away by a second instantaneous work of grace—"sanctification." "Acquired depravity" seems to be the very thing that does remain, at least in some degree, after regeneration. This "acquired depravity," however—this liability of the converted sinner to return to sin—grows gradually less the longer he continues in the Christian life. The exact time when it reaches the zero point, and the soul is left with nothing more than that natu-

ral liability to sin which belongs to all moral free agents in a state of probation, is probably known only to the omniscient mind of God. But are there not moral differences among those who are to be recognized as truly regenerate?

Moral Differences among the Regenerate.—While personal salvation is a radical transformation wrought by the almighty power of God, it is yet modified by the previous character and the environments of the person saved. That is to say, a converted heathen is not at once transformed by his regeneration into the same moral being that we have in that convert who has had Christian parents and Christian environments, and this is none the less true if the former convert be from the "slums," a "heathen at our own door." Conversion from sin is modified, to a greater or less degree, by knowledge, knowledge of what regeneration is in its nature and results. Hence conscience is not the same in all Christians. A converted Jew in the days of David was not exactly the same man that a converted Christian must be in our day. As some men are by nature and by early training, as well as by the force of evil habits, more bent to sinning than others are, so some truly regenerate souls are more liable to return to sin than others are. Any true diagnosis of sin must recognize these discrepancies and differences that exist among truly converted people. Whether this something which thus

distinguishes some Christians from others, indeed distinguishes every regenerate believer more or less from every other believer, is to be called sin or not, is, as we have already seen, simply a question as to what is the proper use of the word "sin;" it is simply a question as to whether we shall say that one Christian is less sinful than another, or that one Christian is more holy than another. If sin (ἀνομία) be defined as "any and all want of conformity to the perfect law of God," then it is consistent to call this something "sin;" and from this it would follow not only that there is sin in believers, but that there is more sin in some regenerate believers than in others. And as to the different degrees of "liability to sin" which characterize Christians, that is something which grows continually less as one perseveres in the Christian life, and such are the conditions of moral probation that it must require time to reduce that liability to the minimum. Having now defined wherein and how far sinfulness and sins may be predicated of justified and regenerate believers, and having shown wherein and why there are moral differences among the regenerate, we return to a consideration of the sins previously enumerated as characterizing all "merely regenerate" believers.

Do Sins of Pride, Temper, Self-Will, Etc., Characterize the Truly Regenerate? —In order to determine whether or not the particular sins previously specified and des-

ignated as the "sins of believers" do really characterize those who come up to the Bible definition of truly regenerate believers, we must first discriminate between that which is sinful and that which is not sinful in these so-called "sins of believers." Resentment, pride, self-esteem, love of the world, self-will, love of human praise, fear of men—these things are not necessarily and wholly evil, but are all rooted and grounded in principles that are essential to man's very nature. The spirit which prompts man to resent a real wrong is necessary to manhood, and there may be a righteous resentment as well as sinful resentment. Is there not such a thing as laudable pride; is not self-respect a virtue; is stoical hatred of the world to be commended; can a man who has no will of his own be a power for good; should a man be indifferent to the praise or condemnation of his fellows? It may be very difficult to discern in these matters where that which is innocent ends and that which is sinful begins; and hence we should probably be very strict in judging ourselves and duly charitable in our judgments of others in these particulars. But, being sure that the cases under consideration involve *sinful* "resentment," "self-will," etc., we are prepared to consider whether these things are "sins of believers" or sins wholly incompatible with the character of a regenerate believer. It is pertinent to ask: Is that man's "heart" truly regenera-

ted who has these feelings? Does regeneration, in the first instance, leave a man with these "sins" in his heart and nature? We think not. Those who both attain *and retain* justification and regeneration in its completeness, as defined in the Bible and in the sermons of Mr. Wesley, will not and cannot cherish at the same time the sinful feelings and tempers here described; and if any regenerate believer comes to have or cherish such evil thoughts, feelings, and tempers as are here described, he is just so far a backslider.

The Principle Practically Tested.—Let us suppose a case in point. Two professing Christians come to me: the one has told a falsehood, and has stolen his employer's money; the other confesses to sinful resentment, sinful love of the world, envy, jealousy, etc. I say to the former: "You have committed an actual and willful sin; you have fallen from grace, forfeited your title to salvation, and are under divine condemnation." Now shall I say to the latter: "You too have sinned, but the particular sins which you recognize in yourself are the 'sins of believers;' they are incidental to your 'merely regenerate' state, and do not, therefore, involve divine condemnation and a forfeiture of the state of salvation. You were 'saved from sin' at your regeneration, but you have not yet been 'saved from *all* sin,' and these particular sins that you now confess to are the very ones which you have not been saved from. They proceed from the

'remnants of the carnal nature,' from the 'roots of sin' left in you at your regeneration, which can be taken away only by a second work of grace—viz., 'sanctification.' This you should seek at once." Shall I speak thus to him? Or shall I not rather say to him: "These sins that you confess to are, every one of them, wholly incompatible with the character of a true child of God. Jesus Christ, in justification and regeneration, designs to save you from these and all other sinful acts and feelings and tempers. If your heart is not right, therefore, you should go to God and seek immediate deliverance from all sin, and God will give you deliverance. Without this you have no right to consider yourself as one of God's regenerate children." The latter would seem to be the only course consistent with reason and the law of God.

All Conscious Sin Involves Guilt and Condemnation.—But do we not recognize that the above-named sins, in whole or in part, in a greater or less degree, do characterize a large number of *professing* Christians? Alas! we must confess that they do. It is a "true bill of indictment," and we therefore affirm that all *professing* Christians thus described are for that reason just so far below the ideal and normal state of justification and regeneration which is described in the Bible. Are they, therefore, under divine condemnation? They are, we answer, just so far as they have sinful thoughts, tempers, feelings,

etc., seeing that these things are no part of their regenerate state. The grace of Christ is always sufficient to save from all sin; and the reason why these sins characterize them, even for one day or one hour, is wholly in themselves, and not in God or in the insufficiency of the atonement. And will all such "sinful believers" be lost? They will, we answer, except as they forsake all conscious sin, and in penitence and faith seek and obtain the cleansing power of the atonement of Christ. But, with the atonement of Christ unlimited in power and ever available, every regenerate believer can and should live a sinless and holy life every day.

Is It Inconsistent in Justified and Regenerate Believers to Confess Sin?—We have already pointed out on a preceding page how a certain *strong liability to sin* characterizes every newborn soul after regeneration; and since this is connected with that which before regeneration was called the carnal nature, and is more or less proportioned to previous sins and sinfulness, it is common in Christian theology to call it sin. Unfortunately the one word "sin" has had to do duty in Christian theology not only for willful transgressions involving moral guilt, but also for everything else in man's moral nature and conduct that is out of harmony with the perfect law of God. If this disconformity to law is properly called sin, then it is certainly true that there is something in regener-

ate believers that may be called sin, and also true that it grows gradually less the longer one continues in the Christian life. But beyond this it does not seem consistent to speak of any sin or sins as belonging to and consistent with the *normal* regenerate state. The difficulty lies in the fact that any definition of the work of justification and regeneration (such, for example, as that given in Wesley's sermons) that is made to include all that the Bible includes in it, and also to exclude all that the Bible excludes in the way of sin, seems to leave no room for remaining sin or sins. On the other hand, that both sin and sins can be predicated of the great body of professing Christians, both now and in Bible times, is unquestionably true. That the daily confessions and prayers of the most pious and useful Christians recognize "sin" in them, and seek perpetually deliverance therefrom, is a fact that admits of no denial, though some may pronounce it "inconsistent" in regenerate Christians to pray thus. That Christians who lead consistent Christian lives from their regeneration to their death do daily pray in the Lord's Prayer, "Forgive us our trespasses [sins]," and do so without any sense of "inconsistency" in using such language; and that they thereby refer not to the sins committed previous to their justification, but to daily sins, known or unknown, of omission or commission—is also a statement to which all will probably assent. Now, it must be

granted that many a Christian, if he were asked immediately upon rising from his knees to name what specific trespasses or sins he had especially in mind in praying for the divine forgiveness, would be at a loss to answer. And would his embarrassment prove that his prayer was "inconsistent," that he was simply uttering a form of words without any real meaning attached? If one makes confession of sin and prays for forgiveness, he certainly ought to be able to define clearly to himself and to others what sins he has in mind when he prays thus. It is not impossible but that some of the confessions of sin that characterize both written and extempore prayers find their explanation in the fact that it is common and customary among Christian people to pray that way; if this were the only explanation, then we should have to call such confessions and prayers little better than "pious cant." But is it not true that no Christian worshiper, however true and sincere he may be, desires to have his devotions arraigned and brought into the severe court room of a school of logic and there subjected to a cold, intellectual catechism as to self-consistency and conformity to the formulas of theology? The heart has its rights as well as the head in dictating the prayers of a worshiping soul. But whether this be a true and satisfactory explanation of the apparent inconsistency or not, certain it is that the general confessions and prayers of Chris-

tians are meant to cover all sins, whether known or unknown, actually or possibly committed. No Christian needs to commit willful sins in order to make it consistent in him to pray the Lord's Prayer; on the other hand, it is more than probable that no Christian will ever become so holy here in the flesh as not to need to offer for himself the Lord's Prayer in all its petitions. The saintliest men in dying, as abundant testimonies will show, are prone to dwell not on their sense of sinlessness and holiness, not on their piety or nearness to perfection, but rather on their sense of unworthiness and their trust in the mercy and grace of a sin-pardoning God. The cold logic of human philosophy may pronounce this inconsistent; but if so, this "happy inconsistency" will doubtless characterize the utterances of living and dying saints until the end of time.*

* "As there is not a full conformity to the perfect law, the best and most perfect of men," says John Wesley, "do, on this very account, need the blood of atonement, and may properly for themselves, as well as for their brethren, say, 'Forgive us our trespasses.'" Among the last words uttered by Wesley just before he died, when no cloud darkened his near vision of heaven, were these: "I the chief of sinners am, but Jesus died for me." And Richard Watson in his last illness spoke of his own unworthiness, and of his firm reliance on the atonement, repeating with solemn and deep feeling this verse from a familiar hymn by Isaac Watts:

> A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,
> Into thy hands I fall;
> Be thou my strength and righteousness,
> My Saviour and my all.

Imperfect Christians Distinguished from Backsliders.—But does not this presentation of the Christian life make Christian believers to be perpetually backsliding, and therefore perpetually needing afresh justification and regeneration? We think not. A backslider is a regenerate believer who, having sinned, does not immediately repent and go to Christ in faith for forgiveness; and every one who abides in that impenitent and sinning state can be saved only by a new act of justification and regeneration. But the justified and regenerate believer who, as soon as he becomes conscious of anything sinful in his thoughts or feelings or volitions or acts, turns immediately with holy abhorrence therefrom, and goes in faith to Christ his Saviour for deliverance, knowing by the very instincts of his regenerate soul that these things are incompatible with his heavenly birthright and sonship—*that man* is not a backslider, and forfeits not his justification and regeneration, even though he be overtaken in a fault. But this is a very different thing from saying that sinful thoughts and tempers and the carnal nature belong to the normal state of justified and regenerate believers as that state is defined in the Bible. If, however, any Christian theologian believes in such a doctrine of "sin in believers" as recognizes the compatibility of all the above evil thoughts, tempers, and feelings with the normal regenerate state, the very logic of his theology de-

mands that he shall also believe that it takes a second radical and instantaneous work of divine grace to effect a believer's salvation from all sin; and it appears to us, moreover, that all such theologians are entirely consistent and logical in teaching the absolute necessity of experiencing that work of grace during life in order to salvation at death and fitness for heaven.

Conclusions Reached as to Sin in the Regenerate.—What do we admit then, in the way of sin and sinfulness, as compatible with the regenerate state, as not involving in and of itself a forfeiture of divine sonship? We answer:

1. The unfallen Adam had, as he came from the hands of his Creator, a fleshly nature that was a channel of temptation, a source of sin; that was, as it were, fuel out of which the fire of sin could be kindled; but this ought never to be called sin. It is found in the regenerate; it is found in the entirely sanctified.

2. A certain strong susceptibility or liability to sin is found in the regenerate which is something more than a necessary accompaniment of the fleshly nature just spoken of; it is a result or manifestation of what we have called acquired depravity. It varies in intensity in different individuals, being proportioned to previous sins and sinfulness; it tends to grow less and less, weaker and weaker, the longer one continues in the regenerate life. If at any time

it reaches the zero point, and becomes extinct, that point of time is not a subject of consciousness or of observation. As to whether this residue of depravity should have been called sin or not, is a question which it is now too late to discuss; it has already been so designated in the creeds and theological literature of the Church generally.

3. Sins of omission and other modes of falling short of the perfect law of God, due to ignorance, may characterize the regenerate. Regeneration does not supply instantaneously the defects of knowledge. With increasing light and knowledge comes the discovery that such and such acts and indulgences, hitherto regarded as innocent, are sinful; that such and such forms of activity and benevolence, not hitherto regarded as duties, are duties obligatory upon every child of God; and *pari passu* with these revelations of sin and duty, the truly regenerate child of God gives up immediately whatever he thus discovers to be sinful, and takes upon himself whatever he thus discovers is a Christian duty. These are perhaps all the kinds of sinfulness and sins that may *properly* be predicated of regenerate believers who represent a normal type of experience. We should, however, add another which, though very common, is yet abnormal.

4. Sins of surprise, semiwillful sins, cases in which the believer is "overtaken in a fault," cases in

which the moral and spiritual equilibrium of the believer is suddenly upset by outward temptations and unexpected provocations — these may characterize some Christians and do not necessarily involve an immediate forfeiture of divine sonship, *provided* that, as soon as the moral consciousness reveals to the sentient soul the true nature and guilt of what has taken place, there is instant penitence and abhorrence of sin, and turning to God for pardon and deliverance. But if instant abhorrence and penitence and pardon do not follow them; if they go unrepented of, are repeated, become characteristic of any professing Christian — then, instead of bringing down the definition of regeneration to fit his case, we must bring him up to fit the Bible definition of a genuine Christian, or else he cannot inherit the kingdom of God. But while such sins as we have here named may characterize some Christians under the circumstances and conditions named, and may be even common among professing Christians, we are far from allowing that they are the natural and normal manifestions of the Christian character. They should rather be treated as abnormal cases, no matter how common they may be. They are contrary to the main current of a self-consistent, regenerate life. They are like the eddies we sometimes see in a stream going in a contrary direction to the main current.

Sound Exegesis the Only Safe Basis of Sound Doctrine.—We should never construct a theory of the Christian life on that which is abnormal, exceptional, and irregular, simply because experience and observation may show that it is common. If the doctrine of "sin in believers" is to determine the definition of regeneration and justification and sanctification, it is highly important that it be based on a sound exegesis of the Scriptures and on normal types of Christian experience which are not only trustworthy in themselves, but which may properly be made the foundation for general deductions that apply equally and alike to all regenerate believers. For a writer to make a false exegesis of one or many passages of Scripture in the interests of a doctrine is no very serious matter, *provided* the doctrine itself is true and is based on a thoroughly sound exegesis of other Scriptures. But to make a false exegesis of even one or two passages of Scripture becomes a very serious matter if the passages thus interpreted (or rather misinterpreted) are set forth as the very foundation and proof of the doctrine itself. It is because this latter seems to us to be the case in the doctrine and Scriptures we have considered above that we have felt constrained to devote unusual time and care to the question of exegesis. Nevertheless, we would say, in conclusion, that we know of no treatises in devotional literature which can be read more

profitably by all Christians than Mr. Wesley's two sermons on "Sin in Believers," and "The Repentance of Believers"—only, as to the manner of viewing these sins and the manner of getting deliverance from them, we would suggest a "more excellent way," more excellent because more scriptural. Of the various sins which he there enumerates, and which he portrays with such heart-searching analysis, accuracy, fullness, and fidelity, we would have him say that, while they characterize many *professing* Christians, and while they are sins to which all Christians are peculiarly liable, and against which they need to be constantly and prayerfully on guard, no man who becomes conscious of such sins should entertain the idea, even for one moment, that they are normal to his regenerate state. On the contrary, let him be made to know and feel that they are not normal, that they do not belong to any soul that is truly born of God, but are wholly incompatible with the character of a regenerate believer. However, before the reader may be prepared to accept fully this conception of the regenerate and sinless life, it may be necessary that we ask and answer the question as to whether or not the Scriptures teach that there is a second, definite, radical, and instantaneous work of grace to be experienced after regeneration; and if there is, whether it may properly be called "entire sanctification" or "salvation from *all* sin."

SENSITIVENESS TO SIN.

I want a principle within
  Of jealous, godly fear,
A sensibility of sin,
  A pain to feel it near.

I want the first approach to feel
  Of pride or fond desire;
To catch the wand'ring of my will,
  And quench the kindling fire.

From thee that I no more may part,
  No more thy goodness grieve,
The filial awe, the fleshly heart,
  The tender conscience, give.

Quick as the apple of an eye,
  O God, my conscience make!
Awake my soul when sin is nigh,
  And keep it still awake.

If to the right or left I stray,
  That moment, Lord, reprove;
And let me weep my life away
  For having grieved thy love.

O may the least omission pain
  My well-instructed soul,
And drive me to the blood again
  Which makes the wounded whole!

Charles Wesley.

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[See also references to Chapters XIX. and XXI.–XXIV.]

XXI.

CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

THE POSSIBILITY OF SINLESSNESS.

"The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. . . . He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." "He was manifested to take away our sins. . . . Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." (1 John i. 7, 9; iii. 5-9.)

"Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people." (Tit. ii. 14.)

"This is the will of God, Even your sanctification," "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless." (1 Thess. iv. 3; v. 23.)

"As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." (1 Pet. i. 15, 16.)

We are the mariners, and God the sea;
And though we make false reckonings and run
Wide of a righteous course, and are undone,
Out of his deeps of love we cannot be.—*Alice Cary.*

But it may be inquired, In what manner does God work this entire, this universal change in the soul of the believer? Does he work it gradually, by slow degrees; or instantaneously, in a moment? How many are the disputes upon this head, even among the children of God! And so there will be after all that ever was, or ever can be, said upon it. . . . The Scriptures are silent upon the subject; because the point is not determined, at least not in express terms, in any part of the oracles of God. Every man, therefore, may abound in his own sense, provided he will allow the same liberty to his neighbor; provided he will not be angry at those who differ from his opinion, nor entertain hard thoughts concerning them. Permit me likewise to add one thing more: be the change instantaneous or gradual, see that you never rest till it is wrought in your own soul, if you desire to dwell with God in glory.—*John Wesley, 1785.*

Prove to me only that the least
Command of God is God's indeed,
And what injunction shall I need
To pay obedience?—*Robert Browning.*

What stronger breastplate than a heart untainted?
Thrice is he armed that hath his quarrel just;
And he but naked, though locked up in steel,
Whose conscience with injustice is corrupted.—*Shakespeare.*

If your religion does not sanctify your life, your life will be certain to secularize your religion.

XXI.

CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

THE POSSIBILITY OF SINLESSNESS.

We have seen that it is possible for a regenerate believer to turn back again to the world, and to so sin as to come under divine condemnation and be lost. We come now to consider the possibilities of the believer in the opposite direction, that of sinlessness and holiness; and here, whatever is possible to a believer is not only his privilege but his duty.

Variety of Terms Used.—The doctrine which we are now to set forth is variously designated as "sanctification," "entire sanctification," "progressive sanctification," "instantaneous sanctification," "holiness," "entire holiness," "entire purification," "the higher life," "the second blessing," "full salvation," "salvation from all sin," and many other terms and phrases. None of these terms are entirely free from objection. The most common term is "sanctification," and for that reason we shall feel free to make use of it in this chapter in its popular theological signification. But if we do so, we must again remind the reader that, so far as this term is used to designate an experience or work of divine grace separate from and subsequent to regeneration,

whether progressive or instantaneous, such use is theological and not scriptural. In a previous chapter we set forth the doctrine of sanctification as taught in the New Testament, and found that the term is there used to define an experience or work of grace that takes place at conversion along with justification and regeneration.

The Problem Stated.—Is a justified and regenerate believer, as such, entirely free from all sin, and entirely holy? If not, is provision made for his becoming entirely sinless and holy? and how and when is this state to be attained? The first of these questions was answered in the foregoing chapter. We come now to discuss the second. Methodist theology has always maintained that it is not only possible, but the privilege and duty of every regenerate child of God to be entirely holy and free from all sin, and that this experience and state are included in God's gracious provisions for this present life, and not simply for realization at and after death. But, while Methodists are generally agreed as to this, they differ widely in opinion as to how this ideal Christian state is fully and finally attained; whether, recognizing its beginning in regeneration, it be by a work of grace wrought gradually or instantaneously after regeneration. Much of the existing confusion and difference of opinion on this subject can doubtless be attributed to a want of properly defining the terms

used—such as "sin," "sanctification," "holiness," "perfection"—and to a failure to properly define and accurately distinguish justification, regeneration, and sanctification in their relations to each other.

Christian Perfection Defined and Analyzed.—To free the justified and regenerated believer from absolutely everything to which the word "sinful" may be consistently applied; and to bring him into the possession of every personal attribute to which the word "holy" should be applied, and to a state in which perfect love for God and man shall reign supreme in his heart and life—that is the work of divine grace which may for our present purpose serve to define Christian perfection. This work is one of coöperation between God and man; the believer must do his part, and God will do his. We have then: 1. *The work of Christian perfection:* (*a*) negative, getting rid of all sin and sinfulness—discovering sin hitherto unseen and unknown, whether of omission or commission, and getting rid of it, and suppressing, to the point of utter extinction, whatever residue of "depravity" may abide after regeneration; (*b*) positive, attaining all the moral virtues and Christian graces that are necessary to completeness in Christ. 2. *How is the work done?* (*a*) What is done initially at "conversion?" (*b*) What thereafter progressively? and (*c*) What thereafter instantaneously? 3. *When is the work completed?* (*a*) At the moment of regen-

eration? or (*b*) only at death? or (*c*) between regeneration and death? In our treatment of the subject in hand we shall not undertake to follow in regular order the topics presented in this analysis; but we shall feel under obligation to make our treatment as a whole answer all these questions. The believer's perfection negatively considered—that is, his complete separation and full salvation from all that is properly termed "sin"—is the theme of this chapter. The possibilities in the line of what may be called "positive holiness"—that is, the acquisition of all Christian virtues or graces—will be reserved for consideration in the next chapter. However, as it is quite impossible to keep these two phases or elements of Christian perfection (the negative, "sinlessness," and the positive, "completeness") altogether separate in a discussion of this doctrine, it would be more accurate to say that in the next chapter we shall dwell mainly on the latter phase of the doctrine, while in this chapter we shall dwell mainly on the former—viz., the attainment of a state of sinlessness, or "entire sanctification."

Is Entire Sanctification Salvation from All Sin?—One of the most common and significant of all definitions of entire sanctification is, as we have already seen, "salvation from *all* sin." As this phrase, however, carries along with it the implication that the "salvation from sin" that takes place in justification and

regeneration is only partial and incomplete—that there is some sin then seen and known from which the soul is not then saved—the definition is not free from objection. When God at and in conversion justifies, regenerates, and sanctifies (we here use this word in its strictly scriptural sense) a soul, he pardons all sin, he breaks the dominion of all sin, and he separates from all sin, so far as sin is then seen or known by the soul that is saved. But the truth is that, while these distinctions between "sin" and "all sin," "sanctification" and "entire sanctification," are entirely legitimate as *theological* distinctions, neither of them is strictly biblical. Although the Scriptures sometimes use the expression "all sin," "all unrighteousness," etc., and then again the words "sin," "unrighteousness," etc., simply, without any preceding "all" to qualify them, it is yet quite evident that "unrighteousness" and "all unrighteousness" are used interchangeably in the Bible, and so are the expressions "sin" and "all sin;" and hence they can have no reference whatever to the technical distinction which is made by some theologians and preachers when they define justification and regeneration as "salvation from sin," and "entire sanctification" as "salvation from *all* sin." The only instance in which the Bible even seems to justify the distinction between "sanctification" and "entire sanctification" is in 1 Thessalonians v. 23:

"The very God of peace sanctify you *wholly*." But we have already seen that the word "wholly" here is not in the Greek an adverb, as one would infer from the English translation, but an adjective, a compound adjective, made up of the two words "whole" (*holos*) and "perfect," the word used for perfect (*teles*) being one that indicates *final* perfection as distinct from an earlier perfection—a perfect man or tree as distinct from a perfect child or plant. The idea is that sanctification is the means or method used to attain this result of final perfection. One is made perfect by penitence, by faith, by separation from sin, by love, by service, by suffering, *by sanctification;* by many methods and many means is the soul brought to its final perfection. These words are followed immediately by others that are full of suggestiveness: "And may your spirit and soul and body be preserved *entire*, without blame," as the Revised Version most accurately renders it. The word "entire" (*holokleros*), like "wholly" (*holoteles*) above, is one of the strongest words in the Greek language, but the two are to be carefully distinguished. Paul's prayer is not that the Thessalonian believers may be preserved in "complete *final* perfection" (*holoteleios*), as if that ideal state, that *ne plus ultra* in Christian experience, was one which had been already attained, and, having been attained, was thenceforward simply to be retained—no, final

perfection is a goal that always keeps ahead of the advancing believer, while he is perfecting holiness in the fear of God. As Dr. Thayer has pointed out in his New Testament lexicon, the word for perfection which is here translated "entire" (*holokleros*) means that "no grace which ought to be in a Christian man is wanting," and in that sense a believer may be perfect from the moment of his conversion. The other word (*holoteles*) means not only that every grace is present, but that each grace singly and all of them together have reached a state of ripeness and maturity; it means *complete and perfect in all respects.* We may naturally infer that there is a progressive work of grace leading up to this final result. There is "perfecting holiness in the fear of God." But repentance, faith, righteousness, love, and everything else that enters into Christian experience, are subject to the same law of increase and to this "perfecting" process.

Is the Attainment of Entire Sanctification an Instantaneous or a Progressive Work of Grace?—All Christians believe in progressive holiness in the sense of growth in grace from conversion until death. But there are some who believe that the only method of attaining entire holiness is by a gradual and progressive work, denying that it can be attained instantaneously. On the other hand, there are some who, while admitting that the attainment of a state of en-

tire holiness by gradual growth may be theoretically possible, yet contend that, as a matter of fact, it is never so attained, and hence assert that the only practicable method of obtaining "salvation from all sin" is by a radical and instantaneous work of grace. There are others who prefer to say that justification and regeneration are a perfect work (that is, perfect of its kind); that they involve salvation from all sin so far as then seen and known; that the newborn soul is, as such, perfect (perfect, that is, as a *child* may be perfect); that with growth and advancing knowledge, however, come new discoveries of sin, and with these, gracious and instantaneous deliverance therefrom; that the perfect life, therefore, involves as an essential part of its progress not one merely but many instantaneous deliverances from sin. Faith and divine grace, uniting in the believer, are equal to any emergency that may arise in his life. To see sin is, for a believer, to turn from it at once and to be delivered from it by divine grace at once.

The Real Question at Issue.—The point we must now decide is this: Does the Bible teach, and Christian experience confirm the doctrine, that there is, subsequent to regeneration, a second radical and instantaneous work of divine grace within and upon the moral nature of the regenerate believer, which must take place before death in order to his complete salvation from all sin? That this is the real and vital point

at issue between the varying theories of "sanctification" can, we think, be clearly shown. It is universally conceded that regeneration is a "radical, instantaneous, and necessary work of divine grace within and upon the moral nature of man;" the question here is whether a *second* work *of this kind* enters into the ideal of Christian life and experience which is set before us in the Bible. It is not a question as to whether some regenerate Christians do not need a "second radical and instantaneous work of grace," for it would be conceded that many who claim to be regenerate do both need and experience such a work; and, having experienced it, they will call it "sanctification" or "the second blessing," or whatever else they are taught by their spiritual guides and teachers to call it; but the question is whether all truly regenerate persons must experience such a second work in order to be saved from all sin and to attain perfect love. Spiritual blessings and baptisms of the Spirit are experiences subsequent to regeneration, which come instantaneously to believers whenever they are needed and sought in faith; but they are not, like regeneration, "radical" (that is, transforming the nature) operations of the Holy Spirit within and upon the moral nature. If the question were simply as to whether there is a progressive work, it might be answered by all alike that there is; for all agree, as we have above remarked, that there is "progressive

sanctification," or growth in grace from regeneration until death. The point at issue, therefore, is as to whether there is an important, decisive, and necessary work subsequent to regeneration that must be instantaneous. It is not a question, again, concerning "salvation from sin;" it is conceded that that takes place at justification and regeneration; but it concerns a "second full and complete salvation *from all sin*." It is not a question concerning the salvation of a fallen believer from his backslidden state—that consists of justification and regeneration as in the first instance—but it has reference entirely to that "residue of sin" which is left, or is supposed to be left, in the heart or nature of all believers until it is removed by a second act of God, similar to regeneration, by which he now extirpates *all sin*. Nor is the point at issue one concerning the privilege of experiencing a second work of grace, as if it were a matter of choice whether the believer will attain unto such an experience or not; but rather concerning the *necessity* of such a *second* work. It is conceded by all that believers may, subsequent to their regeneration, seek and obtain instantaneously a baptism or outpouring of the Spirit; the point at issue is whether that "something" that has been experienced in certain given cases, and which is called "sanctification," consists in the extirpation of all sin from the regenerate heart and the attainment of "perfect love."

With this explanation of what is involved in the point at issue, the question may, for convenience, be reduced to this: Is "entire sanctification" an instantaneous work, or is the attainment of Christian perfection an instantaneous experience?

What Scriptures Are Alone Relevant to Settle This Question?—Let the reader now take this question to the Scriptures. No passage of Scripture, of course, can be said to answer the above question affirmatively, unless it (1) refers unmistakably to those who are truly regenerate; and unless it (2) recognizes certain sin in them, or the absence of certain Christian virtues, as an inevitable accompaniment of their truly regenerate but as yet "unsanctified" state; and unless it (3) points plainly to the entire removal of that sin, or the attainment of those absent virtues, by an instantaneous experience. For if the passage may refer to the unregenerate, or to a backslidden believer; if the particular sin named be mentioned by the inspired writer, not as normal to and characteristic of the regenerate state, but as wholly incompatible with continuance in that state, and therefore mentioned only to be rebuked and condemned; then such passage of Scripture, whatever it may mean to one who already believes in "instantaneous sanctification," can have no value as proof of the doctrine to one who denies that it is taught in the Bible. It is not enough to find certain passages which are capable of being reconciled

to the doctrine of the "instantaneous sanctification" of regenerate believers. These passages, at least some of them, should contain that doctrine to the exclusion of all other interpretations, if they are to possess any real value in settling the question at issue.

Salvation from All Sin Provided for in the Atonement.—That the atonement of Christ provides for the Christian believer's salvation from all sin is abundantly shown by the following passages of Scripture: "He was manifested to take away our sins. . . . For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil. Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin." (1 John iii. 5, 8, 9.) "Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." (Rom. vi. 6.) "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts." (Gal. v. 24.) "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. . . . He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (1 John i. 7, 9.) "If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work." (2 Tim. ii. 21.) "Christ gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people." (Tit. ii. 14.) "For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are

sanctified." (Heb. x. 14.) "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." (1 Thess. iv. 3.) "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly; and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless." (1 Thess. v. 23.) "Wherefore Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his own blood, suffered without the gate." (Heb. xiii. 12.) "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." (Heb. xii. 14.) "As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation; because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy." (1 Pet. i. 15.) "Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth. . . . And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." (John xvii. 17, 19.) "And the Lord make you to increase and abound in love, . . . to the end he may stablish your hearts unblamable in holiness before God." (1 Thess. iii. 12, 13.)

Do These Scriptures Teach Instantaneous Sanctification?—That entire sanctification, holiness, salvation from all sin, perfection, are all included in that ideal of religion which is set before us in these passages of Scripture, no one can doubt. The question now is: Do the above passages of Scripture, any or all of them, point unmistakably to a second instantaneous and radical work of divine grace, subsequent to regeneration, as the experience by which those who

have been previously "saved from sin" are now "saved from *all* sin," "sanctified," made "holy," "perfect?" Or do they simply recognize all these things as included in that ideal experience, character, and life which go to make up the Bible definition of the true religion of Christ, which is the possession of all those who measure up to the description of true, regenerate believers? Let the reader make a careful examination of each of the above passages, and then answer this question for himself. If we have rightly interpreted these Scriptures, they teach that living the sinless and perfect life therein described is not an experience of some Christians merely, but it enters into the very definition of true Bible Christianity. It is a life made graciously possible to and divinely imposed upon every regenerate believer from the very beginning of his new life in Christ. To live that life is to "perfect holiness in the fear of God." Absolute fidelity to the plain teachings of the Scriptures is our only safety here. Few things are more harmful to the cause of vital godliness than to make the Bible teach what it does not teach in matters that pertain to the essence of personal salvation; nor does the fact that he who misinterprets is sincere in his opinions prevent his misinterpretations from doing harm wherever they are believed. "Try all things," says John Wesley, "by the written Word, and let all bow down

before it. You are in danger of enthusiasm [fanaticism] every hour, if you depart ever so little from Scripture—yea, or from the plain, literal meaning of any text, taken in connection with the context."

Origin of Wesley's Doctrine of Instantaneous Sanctification.—The debt which the Christian Church owes to John Wesley for his exposition of the doctrines of personal salvation cannot well be exaggerated. Personal religion has had a new and deeper meaning for the modern religious world since he lived and preached his heart-searching sermons. His own spiritual awakening made him see more meaning in the Scripture doctrines concerning personal religion than others of his day had seemed to see. He was eminently a biblical preacher. *Homo unius libri* is what he called himself—"a man of one book," and that book the Bible. But it is a fact of curious interest that, while Mr. Wesley in the first instance derived his high and holy ideal of religion from studying the Bible, and then applied that ideal to the experience, character, and life of himself and others, pressing all up to the Bible ideal, his ideas of *instantaneous* sanctification * were derived first from certain Methodists professing to have experienced it, and then the Bible was examined to see if it taught the doctrine. He thought it did, but the exegesis by

* See Wesley's sermon on "Patience;" also Tyerman's "Life of Wesley," Vol. II., pp. 417, 444, 461.

which the Bible was thought by him to teach it is considered by many as strained and unwarranted. The strength of his high doctrine of religion (justification, regeneration, holiness, witness of the Spirit) is in its abundant Scripture proof and fidelity to sound exegesis; the weakness of his doctrine of "*instantaneous* sanctification," as a second radical and necessary work of grace subsequent to regeneration, is, in the judgment of many of his followers, in the absence of clear scripture proof on the vital point involved, and in the undue weight which he gave to the testimony of those who professed it, and most of whom, according to his own testimony, later lost the blessing.*

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*Mr. Wesley was once asked what his own feelings and experiences were with regard to sanctification, and replied by quoting from Charles Wesley's hymn, beginning, "O thou, who camest from above," written on Leviticus vi. 13: "The fire shall ever be burning upon the altar; it shall never go out."

Jesus, confirm my heart's desire,
To work and speak and think for thee;
Still let me guard the holy fire,
And still stir up the gift in me.

Ready for all thy perfect will,
My acts of faith and love repeat,
Till death thy endless mercies seal,
And make the sacrifice complete.

This was a beautiful reply. There is no evidence that Mr.

Necessary Consequences of the Doctrine of Instantaneous Sanctification.—If the doctrine of *instantaneous* sanctification, with all its concomitants, be true, then does it follow: (1) That believers must be divided into two classes, regenerate unsanctified believers and regenerate sanctified believers, made different by the fact that the latter have all experienced a radical and profound work of grace which none of the former have experienced; (2) that sins are to be divided into two kinds, "sins of unbelievers" and "sins of believers;" (3) that there are two kinds of conviction, repentance and faith—the one the condition of regeneration, the other the condition of sanctification; (4) that "salvation from sin" is to be distinguished from "salvation from *all* sin; (5) that the

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Wesley ever experienced or professed what he preached as possible and what he defended in others as an actual experience. Dr. Dodd said in one of his publications: "A Methodist, according to Mr. Wesley, is one who is perfect, and sinneth not in thought, word, or deed." To this Mr. Wesley replied: "Sir, have me excused. I have told all the world *I am not perfect*, and yet you allow me to be a Methodist. I tell you flat, I have not attained the character I draw. Will you pin it to me in spite of my teeth?" Mr. Wesley's letter to Dr. Dodd is dated March 26, 1767. In 1770 he said that of those who professed to have obtained the blessing of instantaneous and entire sanctification hardly one in thirty retained it. The same observation was made at other dates. See Tyerman, Vol. III., p. 59.

"fruits of sanctification" must differ in kind or degree from the "fruits of regeneration," and serve definitely to distinguish the sanctified from the unsanctified, just as the "fruits of regeneration" differ from the "fruits of the carnal nature," and serve to distinguish the regenerate from the unregenerate; (6) that, inasmuch as in the entirely sanctified original or inbred sin has been entirely destroyed, it can no more be in them, even though they fall away from their sanctified state. And supposing that one entirely sanctified should fall into the state, not of the unregenerate, but of "the regenerate unsanctified," it is pertinent to inquire what indwelling sin then remains in him. Not "acquired depravity"—that was taken away, according to this theory, by regeneration; not original sin—that was *entirely destroyed* by his "sanctification," and no subsequent fall could bring *that* back again. He is then without any sin *in him*, and yet he is unsanctified!

Important and Cardinal Truths Admitted by All.—Whether these consequences and considerations should not raise doubts concerning the correctness of the doctrine in question, each reader must decide for himself, as he must the previous question as to whether or not there is any scriptural warrant for the doctrine of instantaneous sanctification as a work of grace separate from and subsequent to regeneration. It is well, at this point, to call attention to some im-

portant truths concerning sanctification which all admit: (1) There is no reason why a believer may not be entirely consecrated to God from the very beginning of his regenerate life. (2) The blessing which some believers experience subsequent to their regeneration, whether it be *a* second blessing or "*the* second blessing," certainly marks a mighty change for good in their spiritual lives, and must therefore come from God. (3) Many who profess to have experienced the blessing of entire sanctification are, in the judgment of Christian charity, to all outward appearances, no better than—indeed, less perfect than—many others who are neither professors of, nor even believers in, the doctrine of "instantaneous sanctification." (4) Every one who is conscious of not being saved from all sin should seek and obtain immediate and instantaneous deliverance therefrom in penitence and faith, and this regardless of whether he considers that he has been previously regenerated or not. (5) As repentance of sin and faith in Christ are the conditions of both regeneration and entire sanctification; as sin is the one thing from which deliverance is sought in each case; as the meritorious cause is the atonement of Christ and the efficient agent is the Holy Ghost alike in each case—it is a matter of secondary importance by what name we designate any work of divine grace, so long as we are being saved from all sin, made holy, perfect.

The Important Point.—There can be no difference of opinion as to the necessity for a radical and instantaneous work of grace within and upon the moral nature of every man who is conscious of, or manifests, the various sins enumerated in Mr. Wesley's sermons on "Sin in Believers" and "The Repentance of Believers," and in whom there is so much of the carnal nature that "he cannot do the things he would." The difference of opinion manifests itself altogether in defining the moral status of the "sinner" who is chargeable with these sins, and in naming the gracious work to be wrought upon him. Some regard him (1) as a saved man in the *normal* regenerate state; while others regard him as one who either (2) has never been truly regenerated, or (3) is a backslider, or (4) is in an *abnormal* regenerate state, as one "under censure," self-condemned, and divinely condemned in a degree, but still in a state wherein, if he died suddenly, he would be saved. Those who hold the first view call the moral change which the "sinner" in question needs "entire sanctification;" the second view demands that it be called "regeneration;" the third, "restoration;" the fourth, a necessary "quickening" into normal life. Now what we would call attention to is, that these differences all have reference to relatively unimportant points, and that on the all-important point all are agreed—viz., that every such person can and should

experience at once a radical work of grace and be saved from all sin. It behooves us, therefore, to emphasize the all-important point on which there is perfect unity, and not place the emphasis, as many do, on the unimportant point of difference, thus causing needless doctrinal friction. A life entirely free from all conscious sin, both internal and external, has been made possible by grace and is conditioned on repentance and faith; and it is the privilege and duty of every regenerate child of God to live that sinless life.

The Keswick Movement.—In the lake country of England there is a beautiful little village called Keswick that has given name to one of the most important religious movements of recent times. For the past twenty years it has been the gathering place annually of an increasingly large number of Christian people whose one main purpose has been the deepening and intensifying of the spiritual life. The gatherings have been similar to those held at Northfield, Mass., under the leadership of the late Mr. D. L. Moody. *Sanctification for service by the power of the Holy Spirit* has been the keynote of this movement. If other forms of this higher life movement have given undue emphasis to certain "ecstatic delights" and a certain "spiritual luxuriousness" as the privilege of those who were favored with this special blessing, the Keswick and Northfield movements have escaped this danger by attaching no spe-

cial value to the emotional element involved, but have placed the whole emphasis upon consecration for service, as the crowning evidence of a holy life. This movement has some points in common with the Wesleyan doctrine of Christian perfection, but the Keswick leaders have been careful to guard against any identification of their movements with what is known as "the second blessing" movement. These "higher life" movements have not been confined to any one denomination of Christians, but in some form or other have touched every Church. Some few have identified the higher life with a special and instantaneous experience and made it a second radical work of divine grace like regeneration, extirpating all sin, an experience which, if maintained, renders any subsequent experience of like nature unnecessary. This particular phase of the higher life doctrine has met with no sympathy from others who yet believe that most professing Christians need to have their religious and spiritual life intensified and deepened from time to time by renewed acts of consecration and fresh outpourings of the Spirit. "It was just this pretension to a spiritual elevation to be reached only by a special process which led the devout Spurgeon to protest that, while it was the privilege of every believer to enjoy peace of mind, the 'higher life' claim was a pernicious mistake. Indeed, it was a familiar remark among pastors in the day

when this propaganda was rife that no one could attain the 'higher life' and escape making mischief. So permanent became this impression that it is not unusual to hear leaders at Northfield like the Rev. G. Campbell Morgan declare that they know nothing of a 'second blessing,' or a third, or a thirtieth, but only that the Holy Spirit leads the soul through great crises to great attainments. And the sagacious Moody, who could use zealous workers without committing himself to their theories, would remark that the nearer men are to being sinless the less they talk about it."

All Willful Sin Not Only Inconsistent but Incompatible with the Regenerate State.—If it be true, as Calvinism teaches, that all truly regenerate believers sin daily in word, thought, and deed as long as they live, and yet none who are regenerate can ever be severed from Christ again as long as they live—in that case, and in that case alone, is a distinguished Calvinistic divine warranted in making the following distinction between what is inconsistent and what is incompatible with the Christian life:

We should be very slow to pronounce that a man cannot be a Christian because he has done so and so. Indeed, are there *any* sins which are clearly *incompatible* with a Christian character? All sins are *inconsistent* with it, but that is a very different matter. If the uniform direction of a man's life is sinward, selfish, devoted to the objects and pursuits of time and sense, *that is incompatible* with his being a Christian; but, thank God! no single act, however dark, is so, if it be contra-

ry to the main tendency impressed upon the character and conduct. It is not for us to say that any single deed shows that a man cannot be Christ's. (Dr. Alex. Maclaren.)

This is taken from a sermon which undertakes to reconcile David's adultery and other sins with his uninterrupted continuance in a state of personal salvation; and this even though it took a message from Nathan the prophet to arouse him to a due sense of his sin. Indeed, the author goes even farther, and undertakes to show that such "single sins" are not "incompatible" with the pursuit of perfection and a high state of holiness. Now, as we reject the theological premises on which the above statements are based, we repudiate this method of reconciling conscious and willful sin with a state of personal salvation. All willful sins we regard as not only inconsistent but incompatible with the regenerate state. To any who have been guilty of such sins we can hold out the hope of salvation only on the condition of penitence and pardon following the sins in question, and not on the ground of any work of grace experienced previous to their commission. Admit, if we may and must, that *some* sins are compatible with continuance in the regenerate state—semiwillful sins, sins of surprise, cases where one is suddenly "overtaken in a fault," whereupon the soul instantly, upon recovering full moral consciousness, rebounds and goes out in penitence and prayer for pardon and

rescue—admit that in such a case the branch, though bent nigh to breaking, was not severed from the vine. But as to reconciling "any single sin, however dark," with an exalted state of holiness and with the pursuit of perfection—let it not be once named among us. It cannot be unless our theory of the Christian life be wholly erroneous. "We have not so learned Christ" and the Christian life.

St John's Doctrine of Christian Sonship.—"Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not. . . . Whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin, because his seed abideth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is begotten of God." These words of St. John mean that willful sin and Christian sonship are incompatible with each other; that no Christian can sin and abide in Christ at one and the same time; that to commit sin willfully and deliberately is to forfeit sonship. "John here recognizes no intermediate state, no gradations," says Neander. "He seizes upon the radical point of difference. He contrasts the two states in their essential nature and principle. It is either love or hate, light or darkness, a truth or a lie. The Christian life in its essential nature is the opposite of all sin." Nothing is more hurtful in Christian doctrine than to undertake to reconcile conscious sins and sinful tempers with a retention of divine sonship and the favor of God. Many who have held the doctrine of "sin in believers" as here defined were at

the farthest possible distance from antinomianism, so far as they themselves were concerned; indeed, developed the doctrine in all its intensity for the purpose of showing how important and necessary it is to get rid of all sin and become meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. Nevertheless we must insist that the doctrine itself points toward antinomianism—that is, living in conscious sin and yet in conscious assurance of present salvation at the same time—a doctrine which in unguarded hands or hearts is capable of producing most harmful results.

No Middle State between Sin and Salvation.—There is a region to be crossed between sin and salvation, but it has no stopping place, no place of sojourn to abide in. There is a "state of sin" and a "state of salvation," but no *state* between the two. There is a strenuous effort on the part of those who hold the view of entire sanctification now under consideration to find a middle ground between sin and salvation, between serving God and serving the devil, between divine acceptance and divine condemnation. They describe a kind of "*saved* sinner" (that is, one who is not "saved *from* all sin" but "saved *in* sin," in some sin at least), a kind of "condemned son" (that is, one who is unquestionably a child of God, but under condemnation on account of a residue of sin which still clings to him, or rather which he still clings to). But such a middle state is both illogical

and unscriptural. Mr. Wesley sometimes definitely and strongly asserted this Johannine doctrine—that there is no middle ground between being a true, genuine Christian, and being in sin. He tells us that in 1725 (which was thirteen years before his "conversion" and still longer before the doctrine of "instantaneous sanctification" was first accepted by him), after reading Bishop Taylor's "Rule and Exercises of Holy Living and Dying," he "instantly resolved to dedicate all his life to God, all his thoughts and words and actions; being thoroughly convinced that there was no medium, but that every part of his life (not some only) must be either a sacrifice to God or to himself—that is, in effect, to the devil." He then asks this question: "Can any serious person doubt of this, or find a medium between serving God and serving the devil?" To this question, which is quite in accord with St. John's doctrine, we would reply thus: If by "serving God" and entire self-dedication he means to describe the state of a justified and regenerate Christian, and by "serving self and the devil" he means to describe the state of an unregenerate sinner—*no*, there is and can be no medium between the two. But if by "serving God" and complete dedication of self to God he means to describe the state of "entire sanctification" as he defined it, and by "serving the devil" he means to describe the state of an unregenerate sinner, then

we must answer: *Yes*, there is a medium—viz., the state of a regenerate but as yet "unsanctified" believer—and this middle state must be understood to embrace the great body of Christian believers. We consider the former view—viz., the practical identification of the ideal state of justification and regeneration, as defined in the Bible, with the sinless life—to be that which the apostle here teaches—and also that which Mr. Wesley *here* teaches, and this is true no matter how irreconcilable this position may seem to be with the doctrine elsewhere taught, viz., that instantaneous and entire sanctification is a work of grace subsequent to regeneration by which alone the soul is "saved from all sin." We shall later undertake to show how both of these conceptions of the sinless life enter into Mr. Wesley's writings—conceptions which, however irreconcilable logically, were perpetually intermingled in his writings on the subject of Christian perfection.

The Only Safeguard against Antinomianism.—The only sure safeguard against antinomian tendencies and results is to insist on the Johannine doctrine that conscious sin and divine sonship are wholly incompatible with each other; that the discovery of any sin or sinfulness on the part of a regenerate believer, as lurking in his heart or characterizing his life, is a divine call to forsake it *instantly and absolutely*, and only on that condition can he hope for the con-

tinued favor of God and a continued enjoyment of the privileges of sonship. St. John brings to the unregenerate a gospel of full salvation through Jesus Christ: "The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." This was a full salvation to begin with. "These things write I unto you, that ye may not sin," said the apostle; and yet he very well knew that sinning was an easy possibility to the children of God, and that many of them would sin. "And if any man sin"—what then? Say to him that, in his merely regenerate state, this is normal and characteristic of the child of God? Never once is such a thought even hinted at by St. John; but, on the contrary, by every possible variety of expression, he reiterates over and over again the incompatibility of conscious sin and Christian sonship. "And if any man sin"—what then? "We have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." But the eloquence of that mighty and divine Advocate is shown not by his pleading that "if any man sin" he may continue in sin and still be accounted a saved believer in spite of his sin; but rather that he may be saved from his sin, from all sin, by the power of a divine propitiation. "If any man sin"—it matters not whether he has

never before believed to the saving of his soul, or whether, having once been saved, he has turned back to the beggarly elements of the world, or whether, being a believer, he is suddenly "overtaken" in a "sin of surprise;" no matter who it is or when it is or how it is or where it is, if it is conscious sin, there is but one thing for the sinner to do, and that is to forsake it, and in penitence and faith turn to Christ the Saviour for pardon and cleansing. There is no divine discrimination made between the "sins of believers" and the "sins of unbelievers;" Christ saves all from *sin*, and on exactly the same conditions. Happy is he who, knowing his high privilege as a son of God, has discovered the secret place of the Most High and abides under the shadow of the Almighty, that sacred covert where perpetual penitence and prayer and a never-wavering faith are the abiding guarantee that if sin ever comes in sight it does so only to be instantly abhorred, rejected, pardoned, and cleansed by the blood of Christ. This is high ground, immeasurably higher than that which undertakes to reconcile sins of temper, pride, self-will, love of the world, etc., with the normal state of justified and regenerate believers. But it is *scriptural ground*, as well as high ground; and that temple of Christian faith and life can alone stand firm as a rock which is built upon this Mount Zion of holiness, where the Shekinah dwells and where the fire never goes out upon the altar.

CONSECRATION.

Come, Saviour, Jesus, from above,
Assist me with thy heav'nly grace;
Empty my heart of earthly love,
And for thyself prepare the place.

O let thy sacred presence fill,
And set my longing spirit free,
Which pants to have no other will,
But day and night to feast on thee.

While in this region here below,
No other good will I pursue:
I'll bid this world of noise and show,
With all its glitt'ring snares, adieu!

That path with humble speed I'll seek,
In which my Saviour's footsteps shine;
Nor will I hear, nor will I speak,
Of any other love but thine.

Henceforth may no profane delight
Divide this consecrated soul;
Possess it, thou who hast the right,
As Lord and Master of the whole.

Antoinette Bourignon.

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XXII.

CHRISTIAN PERFECTION.

THE POSSIBILITY OF COMPLETENESS IN CHRIST.

"Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him." "And above all these things put on *love*, which is the bond of perfectness." "Always laboring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God." (Col. i. 28; ii. 9, 10; iii. 14; iv. 12.)

"Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Matt. v. 48.)

"Every one that is perfect shall be as his Master." (Luke vi. 40.)

"All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect [complete], thoroughly furnished unto all good works." (2 Tim. iii. 16, 17.)

"Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection." (Heb. vi. 1.)

"Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." (Jas. i. 4.)

"If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. . . . God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect." (1 John iv. 12-17.)

If you find an artist who thinks he paints perfectly, there is no possibility of his becoming a great painter. But if he can bend himself, his very soul, in reverence before the Sistine Madonna, before the creations of the masters, new or old, and feel that they transcend all the power of his exertions so far, and be lifted to seek after those qualities that make them supreme, then there is a chance for him to become a great artist.—*M. J. Savage.*

So near is grandeur to our dust,
So near is God to man,
When duty whispers low, "Thou must,"
The soul replies, "I can."—*Emerson.*

Grant us Thy truth to make us free,
And kindling hearts that burn for Thee,
Till all Thy heavenly altars claim
One holy light, one heavenly flame.—*Holmes.*

O let me love my Lord more fathoms deep
Than there is line to sound with; let me love
My fellow not as men that mandates keep.—*Sidney Lanier.*

I spoke as I saw—
I report as a man may of God's work—
All's love, yet all's law.—*Robert Browning.*

God is love indeed,
And love creation's final law.—*Tennyson.*

When shall we learn that the pursuit of holiness is simply the pursuit of Christ? When shall we substitute for the "it" of a fictitious aspiration the approach to a living Friend? Sanctity is in character, and not in moods; divinity is in our own plain, common humanity, and in no mystic rapture of the soul.—*Henry Drummond.*

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It has been quite common in Christian theology to identify entire sanctification, or salvation from all sin, with Christian perfection, so common that no writer can now ignore the identification; but salvation from all sin is but a small part of the believer's high calling of God in Christ Jesus. The life of the child of God is one of infinite fullness. Christ came not merely to empty man's heart of sin, but to fill it, and to fill it full, of all those things which are the very opposite of sin. He came to make it possible for redeemed man to possess every attribute of inner character and to exercise every virtue in outward life that go to make a complete and perfect man. Completeness in Christ, then — the possession of all Christian graces and the exercise of all Christian virtues — that is the ideal of Christian perfection that we wish now to present.

The Word "Perfection" Defined. — Perfection is a term which may have one of several meanings. There is relative and absolute perfection, finite and infinite perfection, human and divine perfection; perfection of kind and perfection of degree; a per-

fection of beginning, of growth, and of maturity; a perfection that pertains to probationary beings on earth and a perfection that pertains only to the saved in heaven. It is possible, therefore, for one man to affirm of a regenerate or "sanctified" believer that he is perfect, and another to deny that he is perfect, and yet both have practically the same views as to what he really is. The one doubtless has in mind a relative perfection which may be affirmed of a finite, probationary, immature human being; while the other has in mind the absolute perfection of the infinite God, or, at least, of a mature and heavenly state. The word has two meanings, even when used with reference to Christ, who, as God-man, was always perfect, and yet in an important sense he was "made perfect through suffering." To say, therefore, that truly justified and regenerate believers are perfect, or that they may attain unto perfection in this life, are statements which may be considered true or false, according to what is meant by the term "perfection." Not only do different writers use this term in different senses, but, such is the poverty of language, the same writer almost unavoidably does the same thing. John Wesley and his spiritual followers have always maintained the reasonableness and scripturalness of the term "Christian perfection," and have steadfastly contended that, when it is properly defined, it expresses well that ideal of experience and life that is

set before every Christian and is made possible to him by the grace of God.

Early Arminian Doctrine.—The possibility of perfection belongs logically to every system of theology that believes in the moral free agency of man and the unlimited power of the Holy Spirit to apply to man's salvation the atonement of Christ. Not only is it a doctrine of later Wesleyan Arminianism, but it was taught by the early Remonstrants of Holland. "The commandments of God," says Episcopius, "may be kept with what he regards as a perfect fulfillment: in the supreme love which the gospel requires according to the covenant of grace, and in the utmost exertion of human strength assisted by divine help. This consummation includes two things: (1) a perfection proportioned to the powers of each individual; (2) a pursuit of always higher perfection." This was in line with what James Arminius had said before him:

> While I never asserted that a believer could perfectly keep the precepts of Christ in this life, I never denied it, but always left it as a matter to be decided. For I have contented myself with those sentiments which St. Augustine has expressed on this point. He marks four questions that claim our attention: (1) Was there ever a man without sin, one who from the beginning of life never committed sin? And he decides that such a person never yet lived, nor will hereafter come into existence, with the exception of Jesus Christ. (2) Has there ever been, is there now, or will there ever be, an

individual who does not sin—that is, who has attained to such a state of perfection in this life as not to commit sin, but perfectly to fulfill the law of God? And he does not think that any man has ever reached this. (3) Is it possible for a man to exist without sin in this life? And he thinks that this is possible by means of the grace of God and free will. (4) If it is possible for a man to live without sin, why has such an individual never been found? And he answers that it is because man does not do what it is possible for him by the grace of Christ to do.

Concerning sanctification Arminius wrote:

Sanctification is a gracious act of God by which he purifies man, who is a sinner and yet a believer, from ignorance, from indwelling sin with its lusts and desires, and imbues him with the spirit of knowledge, righteousness, and holiness; that, being separated from the life of the world, and being made conformable to God, he may live the divine life. It consists in the mortification or death of the old man, and the quickening of the new man. The Author of sanctification is God, the holy Father himself, in his Son, who is the Holy of Holies, through the Spirit of holiness. The external instrument is the Word of God; the internal is faith in the Word preached. . . . This sanctification is not completed in a single moment; but sin, from whose dominion we have been delivered through the cross and death of Christ, is weakened more and more by daily detriments or losses, and the inner man daily renewed more and more, while we carry about with us in our bodies the death of Christ, and the outward man is perishing. Corollary: We permit this question to be made the subject of discussion: Does the death of the body bring the perfection and completion of sanctification? and how is this effect produced?

Christian Perfection a Bible Doctrine.—Perfection is a Bible term used by inspired writers to describe certain Christians and to define a certain ideal life or state which is set before all the children of God. To live this life, to enter this state and to abide therein, is made possible by the grace of God to every believer who may here, if anywhere, boldly say: "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Indeed, it is not only a possibility and a privilege, but an imperative duty, to live the life of "Christian perfection." We never find a Bible saint, in any instance, calling himself perfect; but we do find the inspired writers using this sacred adjective to describe certain individuals of exceptional piety and a certain ideal type of saintly character. Nor is it an ideal that is impossible of realization Christian theology should not be afraid, therefore, to use this exalted Bible term, nor fail to find place, among its doctrines of personal salvation, for that which is truly the crown and consummation of all the doctrines of grace—Christian perfection. There can be no better method of setting forth the contents of this doctrine than to begin by examining the biblical uses of the word "perfection" in its application to Christian character.

Old Testament References to Perfection.—Noah, Job, and David are all called "perfect," but the sequel shows that the word is used in an accommodated sense

in application to them. The subsequent life of each shows that, when the term was applied to them, they were far from having attained what we now mean by Christian perfection. To Abraham of old came the command of God with startling and imperative force: "I am the Almighty God; walk before me, and be thou perfect." "Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God" is one of the last utterances of Moses to Israel. To have a "perfect heart" was one of the strongest of the many Old Testament expressions for Christian perfection, and goes well with the "perfect love" of the New Testament. The psalmist bids us "mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace." He also defines the ideal man as one that "walketh in a perfect way." But the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews warns us that the Old Testament dispensation had not in it the elements to develop the highest type of saintly character. The dispensation of the law with its material sacrifices developed, he tells us, a saintly company of moral heroes "of whom the world was not worthy," but, for some reason and in some sense, their "perfection" could not anticipate and precede the offering up of the great and only perfect sacrifice for sin: "These all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."

Christ's Doctrine of Perfection.—What saith the perfect Teacher of perfection? Taking up the New Testament, we find at its very beginning, in the Sermon on the Mount, these words—never equaled before and never surpassed since as an expression of the Christian ideal: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." This may be called *the perfect precept of Christianity.* To the rich young ruler who came to Jesus inquiring what he must do to inherit eternal life, the reply was: "If thou wilt be perfect, go and sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven." We have here *the perfect test of Christianity.* These words, and those that follow it concerning the difficulty of a rich man "entering the kingdom of heaven," show that being "perfect" is identified by the great Teacher with citizenship in the kingdom of God and with the possession of eternal life—in other words, being a true Christian and having Christian perfection are one and the same thing. God can receive into his kingdom no one who proposes to be a half-consecrated Christian. He who in the realm of personal religion is consciously trying to be and do, not his very best but only a kind of second best, has no right to expect that his prayer shall be heard. God helps no man to be his "second best;" he admits no man into his kingdom who consciously and definitely proposes to be something less

than his very best. But when one comes to God who proposes to give up absolutely everything that is between him and the kingdom of heaven, whose definite purpose is to be his very best and do his very best, that man may expect his prayer to be heard and answered. All the power of God in heaven is pledged to help the man who is doing his very best—and that is Christian perfection. St. Luke gives us *the perfect Pattern of Christianity:* "Every one that is perfect [or 'when he is perfected,' as the Revised Version renders it] shall be as his Master." Christ is our perfect model, and Christian perfection is nothing more nor less than conformity to Christ. To have "the mind that was in Christ Jesus" and to do in each event of life that which Christ would do, were he in our place, is to be perfect. The injunction of St. Luke, that the perfect disciple "shall be as his Master," is given in immediate connection with warnings against the spirit of criticism and fault-finding; and shows that the precepts, "Be ye perfect" and "Judge not, that ye be not judged," which, in the Sermon on the Mount, are separated by several intervening verses, are even there a part of the same context. This seems to imply that people who think themselves perfect are peculiarly liable to indulge in criticisms of others, and is therefore tantamount to saying that any manifestation of the spirit of criticism and fault-finding in any one is proof positive that

he is not perfect. In Christ's "high-priestly prayer," recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John's Gospel, we read of a perfection that is a result of a triunity between the Father and the Son and the believer. "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." I, thou, them—three in one—sacred trinity. But that does not leave out the Spirit, because, as the indwelling Spirit, he is *in* the believer. The soul that is perfect is a Spirit-filled soul, and is taken up in a sacred sense, as it were, into the very Triunity of the Godhead.

Is Christ's Doctrine Impossible of Fulfillment?—Many seem to think that it is impossible for any human being to realize the ideal of perfection fixed by Christ. But when Christ says: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," the words "even as" do not refer to degree, as if the creature were commanded to be as perfect in degree as his Creator, but, as the context (pointed to in "therefore") shows, it means that he is to act in every relation and detail of life as God would have him act, and indeed just as God does act in the particulars named. Thus it is said that, instead of loving their neighbors only and hating their enemies, as men of the world do, the true children of God must follow the perfect rule and the divine example: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which

despitefully use you, and persecute you; that ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven; for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. . . . Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." That is, the Christian man who loves and treats his enemies just as God does his enemies is, in that one particular, "as perfect as his Father in heaven." And if in every particular and detail of life the Christian does what God does, or what God would have him do—in other words, what Christ himself would do were he in the same circumstances—then is he a perfect Christian and is fulfilling the divine injunction to be perfect. This highest precept of the gospel concerning individual perfection, it will be thus seen, points, not to any internal work of grace, and certainly not to any subjective instantaneous experience, but to an ethical perfection of daily life, made possible by practicing the law of love. Every true child of God can, and should, and must do this.

Paul's Doctrine of Christian Perfection.—The word "perfect" is used in the sense of maturity in the earlier message of Paul to the Corinthians, "We speak wisdom among them that are perfect;" while his later message, after speaking of "perfecting holiness" and of his prayer for their perfection, closes with this farewell, "Be perfect, be of good comfort,

be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you." The associate words here used help to define what is meant by being perfect. It is the perfection of mature Christian manhood, attained through faith in and knowledge of the Son of God, and by imitation of his example, which Paul sets as an attainable goal before his Ephesian brethren in one of the finest passages that inspired pen ever wrote: "And he gave some *to be* apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying [building up] of the body of Christ: till we all come in [attain unto] the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect [full-grown] man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we, . . . speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into him, which is the head, even Christ." The only instance in which Paul speaks of perfection in connection with himself is in a passage to the Philippians, which is so rich in suggestiveness that it must be quoted time and time again in any treatise that undertakes to set forth the doctrines that pertain to the personal salvation and spiritual life of man: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after [press on], if so be that I may apprehend that for which also I am apprehended of Christ

Jesus. Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto [pressing forward to] those things which are before, I press toward the mark [goal] for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. Let us therefore, as many as be perfect, be thus minded." That is, the perfect man is defined as the man who, conscious of his own imperfection, is always pressing forward to higher heights in love, holier regions in saintliness, deeper depths in sacrifice, and wider fields in service for God and man. In the Colossian Epistle are these words: "Christ in you, the hope of glory, whom we preach, admonishing every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. . . . Laboring fervently for you in prayers, that ye may stand perfect and complete in all the will of God." It is the quality of "completeness" that this Epistle emphasizes as essential to the Scripture idea of Christian perfection—that is, not only must any single given virtue be fully experienced, or fully possessed, or fully practiced, as circumstances call for; but no virtue or grace belonging to the Christian character must be wanting; all virtues must be possessed to make a perfect Christian. This idea is perhaps more accurately expressed elsewhere in the same Epistle: "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead

bodily. And ye are complete [made full] in him." He also represents love as the golden clasp that binds together these single "perfections" which as brought together constitute the believer's completeness in Christ. A single section of a circle may be perfect; but it takes all the sections brought together in symmetry and unity to make the perfect circle. So it is with the complete and rounded Christian. Love is the tire of gold that binds all together and gives unity to the whole. This is what the apostle means, in part at least, when he says: "And above all these things put on *love*, which is the bond of perfectness." Some professing Christians seem to be saintly "in spots," seem to exercise some virtues to perfection, while others are entirely wanting in their lives. But the perfect Christian is a *complete* Christian, "lacking in nothing," as St. James expresses it. No true Christian, much less the perfect Christian, can be saintly only "in spots," while he is sinful in other spots: he must be white all over, washed and made white by divine grace. In the second Epistle addressed to Timothy Paul tells us that the purpose of God in providing us with *inspired* Scriptures was that, by a proper use of them, we might become complete and perfect: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect [complete],

thoroughly furnished unto all good works." It is not easy to conceive how even an inspired apostle could set forth any doctrine more clearly and luminously than St. Paul has set forth the doctrine of Christian perfection in his Epistles.

Perfection as Set Forth in the Epistle to the Hebrews.—No book of the New Testament uses the word "perfect" so often as does the Epistle to the Hebrews; but it uses it mostly with reference to Christ's being made perfect by suffering in order that he might, by the power thus gained and the redemption thus accomplished, make man perfect, the law being of itself utterly powerless to accomplish that result. The words "By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified" are not interpreted by commentators as referring to individual and personal perfection; but, to use Dr. Pope's words, "to the objective perfection of Christ's atoning provision." The writer of this Epistle complains of the "arrested development" of those whom he addresses, charging them with remaining in spiritual babyhood and needing to be fed on milk, when they ought to be mature men in Christian character, feeding on solid spiritual food. It is in this connection that he says: "Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection," or "full growth," as the margin renders this last word. Some professing Christians are saintly "by spells," just as we saw that another

type were saintly "in spots." There are some who become enamored of the saintly life, manifest quite a passion for holiness, and it may be make a profession of perfection, but the spell does not last long after the "revival" is over. Such were some of these Hebrew Christians. All such need to learn the secret of "going on to perfection." Steadfastness of purpose is necessary to perfection. In one notable passage this Epistle speaks of the perfect as those who have left the flesh and are in "the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven," designating them as "the spirits of just men made perfect." The benediction with which this Epistle closes contains a prayer of rare depth and compass, which emphasizes God's part in the divine-human process of bringing a saint to perfection -a process which requires a willing will on man's part no less than the effective application of "the blood of the everlasting covenant" on the part of the Holy Spirit: "Now the God of peace, who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever and ever."

St. James's Doctrine—Perfection through Patience and Perseverance.—In his treatment of the doctrine

of perfection St. James is true to his character as the apostle of practical Christianity. He knows of no perfection apart from good works and right living, and hence patience and perseverance are necessary to attain it. "The trying of your faith," says he, "worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting [lacking in] nothing." "Seest thou how faith wrought with his [Abraham's] works, and by works was faith made perfect?" He also defines the perfect man as one who not only controls his tongue, but "bridles his whole body." If Hebrews placed the emphasis on God's part in man's perfection, St. James places the emphasis on man's part in his own perfection.

St. Peter's Doctrine—Perfection by Suffering.—While the writer of Hebrews speaks of Christ being made perfect through suffering, St. Peter speaks of the believer's conformity to his Lord in this respect, and sets forth the place of suffering in the attainment of Christian perfection: "And the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you." The perfection intended here is that of maturity and fixedness in Christian character. Very few if any souls, in the entire history of the Church, have ever attained eminence in piety and usefulness without having to pay

tribute to the law of suffering. Along the *via dolorosa* many a soul has traveled to the land of light. Physical or natural evil is one of the most powerful and effective of all the agencies employed by God to correct moral evil. The psalmist is not the only one who could say: "Before I was afflicted I went astray, but now have I learned thy precepts." "Every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit." And not once but annually, as long as the vine lives, does the gardener continue to prune and purge his vine. Great saints have as a rule been great sufferers.

St. John's Doctrine—Perfect Love.—If St. James knows of no perfection without good works, St. John knows of no "perfection" without love. He never uses the word "perfection" without at the same time using the word "love." These two things, perfection and love, are inseparable; they are like body and soul: perfection is the body, and love is the soul. To live the life of perfect love is the ideal life, the highest life possible to man. Other inspired apostles emphasized other conditions and other elements of Christian perfection; the special contribution which St. John was inspired to make to the biblical definition and development of the doctrine of perfection was to set forth its connection with and relation to that which was the greatest of all the Christian graces, love. "Whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is

the love of God perfected." That is, obedience is the proof of love, and perfect love will show itself in perfect obedience. Again he says: "If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. . . . He that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him. Herein is our love made perfect, that we may have boldness in the day of judgment: because as he is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casteth out fear: because fear hath torment. He that feareth is not made perfect in love." May we not say, then, that the soul's perfection is a triumph of love?

The Triumph of Love.—If ever the soul attains to what, in the gracious estimation of God, is regarded as personal perfection, and is enabled to live the perfect life among men, it will be a triumph of love. Not St. John alone, but Christ and Paul and Peter, and all who have ever studied the philosophy of perfection, make love prœminent in its attainment. It is the one thing that must always be actively present in every process that contemplates the soul's completeness in Christ. Even Moses and the prophets discovered in their early day that in the supremacy of love to God and man was to be found the secret of perfection: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbor as thyself." This is the doctrine of perfect love

as taught in the Old Testament and as reaffirmed by Christ in the New. If we study the context that precedes our Lord's precept, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect," we find that it is concerning love rather than perfection that he is there speaking, and he is enjoining the exercise of a love that is to take in even one's enemies. In Paul's oft-quoted saying, "Love is the fullfilling of the law," we have an almost faultless statement of the principle of perfect love. The thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians rises to the highest point of impassioned utterance that is possible even to inspiration only because the power and triumph of love are the apostle's theme. And he rises again to the same height in the closing verses of the eighth chapter of Romans and intrenches himself on that exalted highland of holiness in the impregnable fortress of God's love. Hear him: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Love is the only power under heaven that

could win that fight. In St. Peter's "chain of Christian graces," that most beautiful "pyramid of virtues" ever constructed by inspired art, it is love again that crowns the whole and makes the pyramid perfect.*

What Is Perfect Love?—The love that perfects must itself be perfect. By saying that love is perfect we simply mean to affirm its soleness and supremacy in man's heart and life. "It is not in the measure of its intensity—which never ceases to increase throughout eternity until it reaches the maximum, if such there be, of creaturely strength—but it is in the

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*Richard Realf has very beautifully sung the praises of love in words that we can well afford to reproduce here:

Art is fine, but love is finer:
Can you paint a soul?
Love alone is true diviner,
Comprehends the whole.

Song is sweet, but love is sweeter:
Was there ever hymn
That, for compass and for meter,
Bowed the seraphim?

Thought is great, but love is greater:
Can thought find out truth?
Love alone is revelator;
Love is—*Love*, in sooth.

The third and fourth lines of the first verse above are changed from the original, which is unintelligible.

quality of its unique and sovereign ascendency that we have the crisis of perfection set before it as attainable. In the interpretation of heaven that love is perfect which carries with it the whole man and all that he has and is. Its perfection is negative when no other object—that is, no creature—receives it apart from God or in comparison of him; and it is positive when the utmost strength of the faculties, in the measure and according to the degree of their possibility on earth, is set on him. Thus interpreted, no law of the Bible is more absolute than this of the perfect love of God. However far this may go beyond our theories and our attainments, it is and must be maintained as the standard of Christian privilege and duty." John Wesley's definition of perfect love has never been surpassed:

Christian perfection is nothing higher and nothing lower than this, the pure love of God and man: the loving God with all our heart and soul, and our neighbor as ourselves. It is love governing the heart and life, running through all our tempers, words, and actions. . . . Pure love reigning alone in the heart and life—this is the whole of scriptural perfection. It implies deliverance from all sin. . . . The heaven of heavens is love. There is nothing higher in religion; there is, in effect, nothing else; if you look for anything but more love, you are looking wide of the mark, you are getting out of the royal way. And when you are asking others, "Have you received this or that blessing?" if you mean anything but mere love, you mean wrong. Settle it, then, in your heart that from the moment God has saved you

from all sin you are to aim at nothing more, but more of that love described in the thirteenth chapter of First Corinthians. You can go no higher than this until you are carried into Abraham's bosom.

Christian Perfection as Related to the Regenerate State.—"There has been," says Dr. William Burt Pope, "a tendency among some teachers of religion in modern times so to speak of Christian perfection as to seem to make it the entrance into a new order of life—one, namely, of higher consecration under the influence of the Holy Ghost. That this higher life is the secret of entire consecration there can be no doubt. But there is no warrant in Scripture for making it a new dispensation of the Spirit, or a pentecostal visitation superadded to the state of conversion. 'Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?' means (as the Revised Version renders it) 'Did ye receive the Holy Ghost *when* ye believed?' In other words, entire consecration is the stronger energy of a spirit already in the regenerate, not a spirit to be sent down from on high. This kingdom of God is already within, if we would let it come to perfection. Neither 'since' in this passage, nor the 'after' in 'after ye believed' has anything corresponding in the original Greek. The teaching tends to diminish the value of regeneration, which is itself a life 'hid with Christ in God.'" Let us, on the contrary, magnify justification and regen-

eration, and give them their true scriptural definition. The soul that is truly justified and born from above is saved from all sin then seen and known, is holy, sanctified, perfect—perfect, that is, as a *child*—and his growth may continue to be perfect at every stage; and while he may in a sense reach Christian maturity, yet his spiritual growth will "go on unto perfection" forever. Perfection is a present law of life as well as an ever-advancing goal to every regenerate child of God.

The Zinzendorfian Doctrine of Perfection.—The view of Christian perfection which we have here advanced should by no means be confused with the Zinzendorfian doctrine, which Mr. Wesley utterly rejected. Zinzendorf's view was that the moment the penitent believer is justified and regenerated that very moment he reaches the highest point of perfection attainable in this life; but the holiness which he had in mind, as that which was alone possible to man, was imputed holiness. "The whole of Christian perfection," said he, "is imputed, not inherent; Christ is our only perfection. Whoever follows after inherent perfection denies Christ. . . . I acknowledge no inherent perfection in this life. This is the error of errors. . . . A believer is not holy in himself, but in Christ only." He held that while in Christ Christian believers were as holy from the moment of their regeneration as they ever would be, yet in themselves

they were miserable sinners. With this doctrine we have no affiliation or sympathy.

The Ideal State of Believers Distinguished from the Actual State.—The ideal and normal state of the justified and regenerate believer is one of positive holiness and entire freedom from all known sin; but the actual state of believers, from regeneration to death, is one that makes it consistent for them to pray daily not only for "deliverance from evil," but for the "forgiveness of sins." But has no one ever actually come up to the ideal state, and attained to all that belongs to the divine sonship? Only one, we answer, the Lord Jesus Christ, in his human nature, and he never once confessed sin; nor, though he prayed often, did he ever pray for the forgiveness of his sins. Why has no one else ever attained the ideally perfect state? We answer: It is not because God has made it impossible, but simply because moral free agents will not do all that they can do and ought to do. Many of Christ's disciples, we are persuaded, do for a time, and it may be many times and in various duties and relations of life, by the gracious help of the Spirit, act just as God would have them act, just as Christ would act; and the reason why they do not so live all the time and in every particular of life is not because they cannot do so. If a man can live one hour or one day without any sin, he can live other hours and other days, and in every relation of life, entirely

without sin. If he could not, God would not require it of him. But what of those times and those particulars wherein he falls short of this Bible standard, particulars which he himself recognizes as involving sin? We answer: They are to be met and covered by the atonement just like all other sin is, and on exactly the same conditions: penitence and faith. Christian perfection is the ever-present ideal and the final goal, but not the condition, of salvation.

Penitence and Faith, not Perfection, the Condition of Salvation.—If any human beings should become as sinless and holy as Christ and continue thus—not simply *call* themselves so or *think* themselves so, but really *be* so—then they would not need to pray daily: "Forgive us our sins." But as God provided the atonement for the race as it was, and as he saw it ever would be, and not for a race that were morally all that they could be and ought to be, so Jesus Christ indited here a prayer, not for those who were all they could be and ought to be, but for those who he knew were not, and for all time to come would not be, all that they could be and all that they ought to be. In other words, God, in his great mercy, has made it possible for penitent believers who do not uniformly measure up to the ideal and perfect life to be saved. This does not mean that God saves man *in his sins*, as if he allowed him to abide there on condition that he would be continually penitent and be-

lieving, but it means that he saves perpetually *from his sins* every one who perpetually in penitence turns from all sin that he becomes conscious of and in which he may be "overtaken," and who in faith seeks the cleansing of the atonement. The very essence of repentance is abhorrence of sin and forsaking sin. It is absolutely impossible for any one to continue in conscious sin and be penitent at one and the same time. Nor can it ever be that any truly regenerate soul will so abuse divine grace as to make that which is designed to save man from his sins an excuse for continuing in sin. Of that antinomian who so abuses the love of God and the grace of Jesus Christ, which are designed to save from all sin, as to make them an excuse for continuing in sin, the Bible has but one awful sentence to utter: "Whose damnation is just." It is impossible to exaggerate the blessedness of the truth we here speak of—the fact that while God has made perfection (that is, Christian perfection, as it is defined in the Bible) to be our privilege and our duty, he has made penitence and faith (that is, our attitude toward sin and toward Christ) to be the condition of salvation. Hence it is that the most perfect men are, as St. Paul has said of himself, those who are most conscious of their imperfections; and when they come to die we never find them thinking of how perfect they are, but, on the contrary, penitent because of their conscious imper-

fections and shortcomings, and turning by faith to Jesus Christ as their Saviour and trusting in him and *him only* for salvation. There is a divine philosophy in this gracious plan of salvation.

The Discontent of Spiritual Wealth.—"To the poor alone," says an ancient proverb, "the gods give content." There is a contentment which is grounded in godliness and is a great gain; it is an evidence of spiritual wealth. But, we venture to ask, is contentment always a virtue and the content of poverty always a blessing? We answer: No; it is often otherwise; it is sometimes a most grievous curse. There is a contentment in material or pecuniary poverty which keeps men poor because it deters them from high aspirations and laudable exertions. It is the content of indifference, inexertion, unaspiring indolence. There is a contentment, also, of intellectual poverty, that keeps people satisfied with their ignorance. It is fatal to intellectual development and progress of every kind. In like manner there is a contentment of spiritual poverty, that dooms to moral mediocrity and poverty of soul all upon whom its curse falls. Those who have attained most in the kingdom of grace are the ones that are least content to stand still in their present spiritual state. They are ever pressing forward with zeal and earnestness to attain something higher in the spiritual life. But the morally poor are very well contented to remain as they are, and

their content is always proportioned to their spiritual poverty. It is only because they have but little religion and spirituality that they are content to remain as they are. Those least noted for piety and least fruitful in good works are the most contented among professing Christians. The man who has attained a spiritual state where he is content to remain *in statu quo* has evidently been caught in a snare of the devil. The best indication of increasing spirituality is such a spirit of divine discontent with present attainments as drives one to the pursuit of an ever higher and holier state. The divine discontent of which we speak is — such is the mystery of grace — always accompanied by the most perfect peace.

Concerning Moral Ideals, Realized and Unrealized.— What a good man would like to be always keeps ahead of what he actually is. The mountain climber is constantly, at every stage of his ascent, seeing higher heights that he did not see, and could not see, farther down the mountain side. As soon as that which was once discerned and pursued as a possible ideal becomes realized as an actual possession, it will be found that already the ideal has moved forward, and something still higher and holier has taken its place in the aspirations of the earnest soul. To speak of a man "realizing his ideal" is very misleading and hurtful if it means that he has reached a stopping place where his business henceforth is simply to

"hold his own." Ideals may be and often are realized. The possible may and often does become actual; otherwise possible ideals would not be real, living ideals. For ability always limits obligation — that is, one is under obligation to be and do only what he can be and do. While all this is true, it is also true that he who is pursuing triumphantly the highest life always has an unrealized ideal ahead of him. It is bad indeed for one to give up his ideal as an impossible thing and to quit trying to live up to it; he had far better bury the best friend he has than to bury or cast away his ideal. But it is almost as bad to realize an ideal and then stop with that, as if that were all, as if that were the highest, and have no ideal that is still higher, still unrealized, still an object of pursuit. We have already called attention to St. Paul's definition of the perfect man as one who is always pursuing and pressing forward, never content with what he has already attained. "Let us," says he, "as many as be perfect, be thus minded." How "minded?" Turn to the immediately preceding verses to see what "thus" refers to. These verses read: "Not as though I had already attained, either were already perfect: but I follow after. . . . I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of

the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." In other words, the perfect soul, the soul that has attained and is attaining most in the kingdom of grace, always has before him a higher and holier state than anything hitherto experienced, and is so absorbed in the pursuit of that which is higher that he has no time nor disposition to dwell on what he has already attained. "And if in anything ye be otherwise minded," he continues, "God shall reveal even this unto you." The consecrated soul may have shortcomings due to ignorance; but if so, God has promised new revelations that shall, by degrees if not all at once, give the needed knowledge. With new revelations and new light there comes continually a new sense of sin, especially of sins of omission and of needless self-indulgence, new visions of holiness, love, service, and sacrifice; and with increasing light and knowledge one's ideal of moral perfection advances to something higher. To some Paul's definition of perfection may seem to be a contradiction—viz., the perfect man is he who, conscious of imperfection, is always pursuing perfection; he who, as fast as he realizes his ideals, finds himself pursuing another yet higher ideal not yet realized. But this is no contradiction; it is the very harmony of all truth concerning Christian perfection. A certain divine discontent, as we have just shown, always characterizes the highborn soul that has a passion

for righteousness and aspires after the highest and holiest in pursuit of the perfect life; and not only aspires, but attains. His aspirations and prayers and ceaseless activities after perfection are the proof that he is perfect.

Christian Perfection a Possibility, a Privilege, a Duty. —Nothing less than perfection, then, is the ideal of character and conduct set before the regenerate believer in the Bible as not only possible to him, but his privilege and his duty. He may be compared to one who is being instructed in the art of penmanship, and is required to follow the faultless model at the top of the page. He is not permitted to look at and copy after the imperfect and faulty lines that may come between him and his model, comparing himself with himself, and then presently counting himself perfect when he has come up to the faulty standards around him. He must hold himself rigidly to the *perfect model* which has been set before him, and only thus will he ever attain to perfect penmanship. So the Bible sets a perfect model before the believer. The perfect precept that he is under is this: "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." The perfect example that he is to follow is Christ: "For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done," "and every one that is perfect shall be as his Master." With this text as his motto and Christ as his

example, every regenerate child of God is started upon his Christian life. To live up to this ideal is his aim and duty every day. The injunction to be as perfect as the Father in heaven is perfect means, as we have seen, that the Christian is to do each and every thing in life as God does that thing, or as God would have him do it—in short, as Christ would do, were he the actor. And this is possible, or it would not be enjoined; for moral ability always measures moral obligation, except where inability is self-superinduced. And yet, even though this be realized, there is still another different and higher perfection: that of perfect growth, ending in the perfection of maturity. Christ, as was above noted, already perfect in one sense, was yet "made perfect through suffering," and so must Christ's followers be made perfect in the same way: by life and labor, by service, sacrifice, and suffering. We grow more and more Christ-like as we live up to this ideal. Infinite pains, unremitting watchfulness of every detail, guarding against every possible error, doing each and every thing, little as well as great, just as it ought to be done—these are the condition and price of perfection in every sphere where rational free agents act. And Christian perfection is no exception to this inexorable law. Let no Christian think that "perfection" is going to come to him bodily and instantaneously in one great blessing from heaven. The one mighty change from

sin to salvation comes that way. Baptisms of the Holy Spirit, divine anointings for service and sacrifice, spiritual blessings, may come instantaneously, and not once or twice merely, but whenever they are needed and sought in faith. But Christian perfection is ethical; it is living perfectly free from every sin and in the perfect discharge of every duty. And that life is possible to every regenerate believer, is made possible by divine grace, and it is his privilege and duty from the very moment of his conversion. That life does not need to be "professed." It shines in its own light, a light that grows brighter and brighter unto the perfect day.

The Place of Christian Perfection in Methodist Theology and History.—The doctrine of Christian perfection as attainable in this life has been generally rejected and condemned by the theologians and theological systems of the Church. It has even been made a subject of ridicule by some writers. Methodism has humbly but firmly asserted the truth of the doctrine from the very beginning of its existence as a Church. Christian perfection is therefore in a peculiar sense the birthright of Methodism, and all true Methodists believe it and preach it and humbly try to live it. The picture of a true and ideal Methodist which John Wesley drew was that of a "perfect Christian," and it still holds true. If there is any reproach in holding this doctrine, it is "the reproach

of Christ," and that reproach any Church can well afford to bear. Those godly men and women who are ever ready to declare their faith in "scriptural holiness" and recognize their obligation to live the life of Christian perfection are alone true to their high calling as Methodists. They who have perfect love in their hearts, and speak it with their lips, and live it in their lives, can well afford to be considered a "peculiar people." But one of their leading peculiarities is a "zeal for good works," a zeal that is "according to knowledge." These are among "the salt of the earth." They have a joy and an honor the worldly-minded, whether in the Church or out of it, know nothing of. These are the true "saints," and are—whether in the pulpit or the pew, matters not—the true spiritual life of the Church. The commission which God seems at the very beginning to have committed to the people called Methodists—at least John Wesley so interpreted their commission—was "to spread scriptural holiness over these lands"—*scriptural*, a word that should never be forgotten in connection with this doctrine. For to spread any other holiness than "scriptural" holiness, or to teach any other doctrine of Christian perfection than that which is founded upon a true and faithful exegesis of the word of God, will be to bring just criticisms upon the doctrine taught. But, rightly defined, this doctrine is the crowning glory of Christian theology.

THE POWER OF PERFECT LOVE.

O how the love of God attracts
  And draws the heart from earth,
And sickens it of passing shows
  And dissipating mirth!

'Tis not enough to save our souls,
  To shun the eternal fires;
The love of God will rouse the heart
  To more sublime desires.

O cherish but the love of God
  Down in your heart of hearts,
And see how from the world at once
  All tempting light departs.

The perfect way is hard to flesh;
  It is not hard to love:
O if thy heart with love were filled,
  How swiftly wouldst thou move!

A trusting heart, a yearning eye,
  Can win their way above;
If mountains can be moved by faith,
  Is there less power in love?

God only is the creature's home,
  Though long and rough the road;
And nothing less can satisfy
  The love that longs for God.

Frederick William Faber.

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XXIII.

THE BELIEVER'S GLORIFICATION AT DEATH.

"Then cometh the end, . . . when he shall have put down all rule, and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. xv. 24–27, 55–57.)

"Whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." (Rom. viii. 30.)

"The God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect." (1 Pet. v. 10.)

Vital spark of heavenly flame!
Quit, O quit this mortal frame!
Trembling, hoping, ling'ring, flying!
O the pain, the bliss of dying!
Cease, fond nature, cease thy strife,
And let me languish into life.

Hark! they whisper! angels say,
"Sister spirit, come away!"
What is this absorbs me quite—
Steals my senses, shuts my sight,
Drowns my spirit, draws my breath—
Tell me, my soul, can this be death?

The world recedes, it disappears!
Heaven opens on my eyes! my ears
With sounds seraphic ring!
Lend, lend your wings! I mount! I fly!
O grave, where is thy victory?
O death, where is thy sting?—*Alexander Pope.*

Is this dying? Why this is bliss. Earth is receding; heaven is opening; God is calling. I must go.—*Dying words of D. L. Moody.*

Out of the shadows of night
The world rolls into light;
It is *daybreak everywhere.*

Longfellow's last written words.

Life! We've been long together,
Through pleasant and through cloudy weather.
'Tis hard to part when friends are dear;
Perhaps t'will cost a sigh, a tear;
Then steal away, give little warning,
Choose thine own time;
Say not "Good night," but in some brighter clime
Bid me "Good morning."—*Anna Laetitia Barbauld.*

XXIII.

THE BELIEVER'S GLORIFICATION AT DEATH.

GLORIFICATION is a theological term, which is used to express "that change which is wrought upon believers at death, and yet farther at the resurrection, by which they are fitted for glory." In so far as it applies to the body, it can refer only to the resurrection. It is as it applies to the soul and takes place at death that we wish here to treat it. We have endeavored to set forth in the preceding chapters the work of divine grace within and upon the human soul in all its forms and stages, showing how man cooperates with God in working out his salvation from all sin. We come now to the point where we must ask if this be all.

Does Dying Grace Exercise Sanctifying Power?—Is there a yet further work of grace wrought upon the soul of the believer at death? "The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death." "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." These and other passages of Scripture point out the close connection

that exists between death and sin, and also between death and salvation; and suggest the inquiry: Is death either the cause or the occasion of the regenerate believer's being entirely delivered from sin in any sense not hitherto experienced? Is there transforming power in dying grace by which the soul of the dying believer is made better, holier, more perfect, than is possible, or than is generally realized, in this life? What evidence is there, either in Scripture or in reason, that such a work takes place at death? This is a department of religious thought in which it is a great deal easier to ask questions than to answer them, and therefore belongs to speculative theology.

How Are Dying Infants Freed from the Sin of Nature?—Whether we can answer our own questions on this subject satisfactorily or not, we are led by many considerations to the point of asking them. We are brought to it from the consideration of infant salvation, thus: All infants dying in infancy are certainly saved. Infants living to maturity have in them original sin (a bias of nature toward evil), from which they can be delivered only by the grace of God. Do not the infants who die in infancy have the same in their natures while yet living and at death? Surely we cannot say that dying infants were free from all sin from birth, and hence needed no regeneration, but that infants living to maturity have in their natures

original sin, and therefore need regeneration. Such a discrimination would be wholly unwarranted. Divine grace, then, it would seem, must needs do something at death even for those who die in infancy.

Are All Regenerate Believers Perfected at Death?—To the penitent thief on the cross Christ said: "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." Did he undergo no further spiritual transformation at the instant of death to fit him for his heavenly inheritance? This dying thief may represent thousands of all degrees of antecedent guilt and sinfulness, who either repent on their deathbeds or die soon after conversion. We must recognize that betwixt the most holy and the least holy of dying believers there is a very wide difference in character. Does grace do nothing, and need to do nothing, for the latter at death to fit them for seeing and dwelling with God? There is no denying the fact that most believers are exceedingly imperfect, both before and when they come to their deathbeds. Are they no more perfect in glory than we knew them to be here in the flesh? Shall we say that all such, in their last extremity, "the moment before death," exercise "sanctifying faith," and thus attain unto "perfection" and entire fitness for heaven? What evidence have we to warrant the conclusion that there will be any such certain and universal deathbed perfection of all hitherto imperfect Christians? Very little, it may be replied, either

from reason or from Scripture; and, making due allowance for some happy deathbed experiences, very little from dying testimonies. Nevertheless, we seem driven to the conclusion that if any considerable number of average Christians should be killed suddenly, as if by lightning, and go at once to heaven, they would be more perfect in heaven than they were at death. It is worth our while to see what some Church creeds and theologians have said on this point.

Purification in Purgatory the Doctrine of the Romish Church.—The doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church is that baptism wipes out all sin up to date; that sins committed after baptism must be removed by penance and priestly absolution; that this penance may and should be complete in this life (and, indeed, by good works even supererogatory merit may be attained); that if penance is not complete at death the soul of the baptized believer must go to purgatory and abide there a longer or shorter time, until the purgatorial fires have purged the soul of all sin and made it perfect and meet for its inheritance among the saints in light.

The Doctrine of the Thirty-Nine Articles.—The thirty-nine Articles of the Church of England recognize sin as continuing in regenerate believers as long as they live; and the logical inference is that it is removed at death by divine grace. The Ninth

Article, on "Original Sin," says: "And this infection of nature doth remain, yea, in them that are regenerated, whereby the lust of the flesh . . . is not subject to the law of God; and although there is no condemnation for them that believe and are baptized, yet the apostle doth confess that concupiscence and lust hath of itself the nature of sin." Again, the Fifteenth Article, on "Christ Alone without Sin," says: "But all we the rest, although baptized and born again in Christ, yet offend in many things; and if we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." These statements, in the absence of any specified provision for removing this sin, render logically necessary a work of grace at death by which the soul of the dying believer is made ready for heaven.

The Doctrine of the Westminster Confession.—The Westminster Confession of Faith, in answer to the question, "What benefits do believers receive from Christ at death?" says: "The souls of believers are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory." It would perhaps not be just to say that the Westminster Confession by this language teaches that death itself has any sanctifying power; death is not regarded as the cause, but simply as the occasion, of the soul's being "made perfect in holiness." It is true that the following question and answer might be said to imply the contrary: "Death

being the wages of sin, why are not the righteous delivered from death, seeing all their sins are forgiven in Christ?" Answer: "The righteous shall be delivered from death itself at the last day, and even in death are delivered from the sting and curse of it; so that, although they die, yet it is out of God's love, *to free them perfectly from sin and misery*, and make them capable of further communion with Christ in glory, which they then enter upon." That the transformation which takes place at death makes believers capable of a higher and more blessed communion with Christ in glory than has hitherto been possible to them, is perhaps a statement to which all Christians will give assent. But the Scripture "proof texts" are wanting for establishing the doctrine that "the souls of believers are at death made perfect in holiness," and that death is "to free them perfectly from sin." This does not signify that the doctrine may not still be true, provided there is no scripture which contradicts it.

Mr. Wesley's Doctrine.—"As to the time [of believers attaining perfection]," says John Wesley, "I believe that this instant generally is the instant of death, the moment before the soul leaves the body; but I believe that it may be ten, twenty, or forty years before. I believe that it is usually many years after justification; but that it may be within five years or five months after it, I know no conclusive argu-

ment to the contrary." Again he writes: "How much is allowed by our brethren who differ from us with regard to entire sanctification? Answer: They grant (1) that every one must be entirely sanctified *in the article of death;* (2) that till then a believer daily grows in grace, comes nearer and nearer to perfection; (3) that we ought to be continually pressing after it, and to exhort all others so to do. What do we allow them? Answer: We grant that many of those who have died in the faith—yea, the greater part of those that we have known—were not perfected in love till *a little before their death.*"

Different Views Compared.—We are here struck with the apparent similarity, but real difference, between Mr. Wesley's views on this point and the doctrine of the Westminster Confession. The latter says: "The souls of believers are *at their death* made perfect in holiness." Mr. Wesley says: "As to the time, I believe that this instant *generally* is the *instant of death*, the moment before the soul leaves the body." The Westminster doctrine is that no believers can be made perfect until death; Mr. Wesley's view is that the great body of believers do not attain perfection until death, but that they all can and should attain it sooner. We observe here that neither the Westminster Confession nor Mr. Wesley advance any arguments, drawn either from Scripture or from Christian experience, to prove that any such

work of perfection is wrought at death. It is the logic of the situation, the exigencies of a doctrinal system, which seems to demand in each case that such a work be located at death. Thus the Westminister Confession teaches such a doctrine of the necessary sinfulness of believers as long as they live here as renders such a work absolutely necessary at death in order to fit them for heaven. Mr. Wesley, on the other hand, taught: (1) That all regenerate believers would be saved at death and immediately pass into glory; (2) that all regenerate believers had sin remaining in them until they experienced a second radical work of grace by which they were entirely sanctified and made perfect; (3) that only those who are saved from all sin, who are "perfect" and "entirely sanctified," will be admitted into God's presence at death; and (4) that the attainment of "Christian perfection" is conditioned on faith, and must take place *before* the soul leaves the body. To reconcile these four propositions, it becomes absolutely necessary to suppose a fifth—viz., that, as the great body of regenerate believers approach death without experiencing (or even believing in) "Christian perfection" as he understood it, they surely must experience it on their deathbeds, "the instant of death, the *moment before* the soul leaves the body." It would be interesting and instructive for Mr. Wesley to have stated his reason for believing that so many believers attain

perfection "the moment before the soul leaves the body." "If there be no second change, no instantaneous deliverance after justification," he wrote again, "then we must remain full of sin *till death.*" But he affirmed time and again that no regenerate believer would be lost. It would seem, therefore, that Mr. Wesley's doctrine might be stated thus: "The souls of all believers who have not previously attained perfection are at their death made perfect in holiness, and do immediately pass into glory."

Do the "Entirely Sanctified" Need Any Further Work of Grace at Death?—But what of believers who have attained "Christian perfection" before death? Do they need no further work of grace to fit them for heaven? Is there no essential difference between the entirely sanctified of earth and the saved of heaven? Is the perfection of heaven in no way essentially different from the highest perfection attainable in this life? Are the saints in heaven going to be no better, no more sinless, holy, and perfect, than the great body of Christians are at death? Most Christians, we are persuaded, will answer these questions by saying: "Yes; whether we can give satisfactory reasons for our faith or not, we believe that all Christians, even the best that we see and know here, are going to be more sinless and holy and perfect in heaven than they are here below." If this be true, then it follows that the transformation from the earthly to

the heavenly ideal of perfection is wrought by God's grace at death. This is involved in Wesley's teachings: "I believe that there is *no such perfection in this life* as excludes these involuntary transgressions which I apprehend to be naturally consequent on the ignorance and mistakes inseparable from mortality. Therefore 'sinless perfection' is a phrase that I never use, lest I should seem to contradict myself." Scattered throughout his writings there frequently appear such phrases as the following: "The highest perfection which man can attain *while the soul dwells in the body;*" "No one of them is so perfect *in this life* as to be," etc.; "From these [infirmities] none can hope to be perfectly freed *till the spirit returns to God* that gave it"—from which it is to be inferred that some further transformation will be wrought by the grace of God at death upon all believers, even the holiest and most perfect.

Views of Drs. Raymond and Whedon.—In like manner Dr. Miner Raymond says: "Some traces of the inherited results of the first sin will remain in these latter natures till man is released from the conditions and limitations of his earthly state, and is, body, soul, and spirit, prepared for and admitted to his heavenly estate. Traces of the fall remain in man's physical, intellectual, moral, and religious natures till glorification in heaven removes them." "Nor does regeneration, infant or adult," says Dr. D. D. Whe-

don, "absolutely remove depravity until completed at the glorification. . . . Our inherent depravity is not entirely removed by regeneration until the regeneration is completed at the resurrection."

Dr. Mudge's View.—Dr. Mudge, in his able volume titled "Growth in Holiness," says:

> Many Methodist theologians vent a great deal of uncalled-for scorn and sarcasm on those who hold that we cannot be sanctified in the fullest sense until the body has been dropped off, charging us with believing in a death purgatory, a heathen philosophy, and the inherent evil of matter, and with substituting something else for the blood of Christ as the proper purifier of the soul. All this is wholly beside the mark, and comes from confounding things that differ. As is seen by the foregoing quotation, they really attack John Wesley himself, although far from meaning so to do. . . . A greater than Wesley has declared the same things, even the mighty apostle to the Gentiles. See Romans viii. 19–25. This can mean nothing but that we are not yet, any of us, fully saved; and, in the fullest meaning of the term, not yet completely redeemed, not yet made perfectly whole, not yet, in the complete or absolute sense, entirely sanctified. But this great fact by no means reflects upon the power of Christ. . . . Death is not the means of our deliverance, as though power were attributed to it; but it is the occasion. God's alone is the power. But it is not irreverence to say that such are the necessities of the case that he cannot do for us in this life what he promises to do in another.

Bishop Granbery's View.—Nearly all regenerate believers are manifestly and consciously imperfect before and at death, and we cannot think that they will

be thus imperfect in heaven; indeed, even the best saints of earth, in some degree, fall below our ideas of heavenly perfection. Bishop John C. Granbery has shown that such a work of God at death is a logical necessity in our theology: "We do not believe that the immature disciple passes into heaven just as he was before death, except the dropping of the body. We believe that God perfects him, that he may be fully fitted to dwell in the glorious land. . . . We cite no proof text for our opinion, but are compelled to think that they (imperfect Christians) need a further adjustment, purification, and polishing before they will be thoroughly genial and trustworthy companions of the angelic and redeemed multitudes in light. Indeed, most of us who rejoice in the hope of eternal blessedness feel that we ought to have, and must have, a decided improvement of our present spiritual state before entering within the pearly gates. Surely all our faults cannot be charged on the flesh. . . . Our view is that God completes the purification 'not a little before death,' as Wesley held, but at the instant of death. Some believers die suddenly, of heart disease, by a pistol shot, by accident; others testify of their peace and assured hope with their latest breath, but make no allusion to entire sanctification or any other great change in their experience. God does not require time to do his work."

A Consensus of Opinion.—Our object in introducing all these quotations is not to show how widely theologians differ concerning the doctrine of sanctification or Christian perfection; but rather how widely differing theologians all seem to unite in affirming, or logically necessitating the affirmation, that the souls of believers, either immediately before, or at, or in, death, have a needful and gracious work wrought upon them, by which they are fitted for citizenship in heaven and for communion with God and angels and "the spirits of just men made perfect."

The Benefits of the Atonement Transcend the Range of Our Free Agency.—All the benefits that come to us from the atonement are not by any means conditioned on our free agency; many of them come to us without any exercise of our free wills. Whether a man shall become a Christian, and whether he shall continue to be a Christian until death, both depend, under grace, upon himself. The degree of his piety, whether he shall become less or more holy and perfect here, is also determined by the regenerate free agent. Holiness of character as developed here constitutes a capacity for enjoyment and happiness in the heavenly state: the holier we become here, the greater will be our capacity for happiness, and hence the greater the degree of our happiness in heaven. This is the great law of our probation under grace. It is not in any way set aside or interfered with by affirming that

God graciously at death works, and needs to work, a transformation upon the souls of all dying saints, from the least unto the greatest, to fit them for glory. This gracious transformation realized at death is what is meant by the believer's glorification.

Perfection at the Resurrection.—Some regard the perfection of which we speak as a thing to be attained not at death, but only at the resurrection which will take place at the end of the intermediate state. This state is regarded as one of conscious happiness, but neither the perfection nor the happiness of the soul is *complete* until the resurrection. Bishop McTyeire held this view. He says:

> No salvation is perfected under the Mediatorial dispensation until that dispensation is consummated. The Mediator must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet by conversion or subjection. Death, the last enemy, must be destroyed. . . . But complete perfection includes the body. The soul must ever tend to and affect its body. Bliss cannot be in the full sense consummated until its restoration, all fit and suitable for an endless union. . . . If, when he appears, we shall be like him—if the perfection of soul and body in the resurrection depends on his appearing—then it is natural that Paul, and all in his condition, though in paradise, should "love his appearing." When in the body, he saw something "far better;" and now in the spirit, still a "far better" is the object of his hope—even the reunion of that soul and body in the glorious likeness of his Lord.

This brings us to our next and last topic, the final consummation of salvation in heaven.

GLORIFIED BY GRACE.

The saints who die of Christ possessed
Enter into immediate rest;
For them no further test remains
Of purging fires and torturing pains.

Who trusting in their Lord depart,
Cleansed from all sin and pure in heart,
The bliss unmixed, the glorious prize,
They find with Christ in paradise.

Close followed by their works they go,
Their Master's purchased joy to know;
Their works enhance the bliss prepared,
And each hath its distinct reward.

Yet glorified by grace alone,
They cast their crowns before the throne;
And fill the echoing courts above
With praises of redeeming love.

Charles Wesley.

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XXIV.

THE CONSUMMATION OF SALVATION.

"But when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. . . . For now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." (1 Cor. xiii. 10–12.)

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory." (2 Cor. iv. 17.)

"But ye are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect." (Heb. xii. 22, 23.)

"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." (1 John iii. 2.)

"We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." (2 Pet. iii. 13, 14.)

So he died for his faith? That is fine—
More than most of us do;
But, say, can you add to that line
That he lived for it, too?

In his death he bore witness at last
As a martyr to truth.
Did his life do the same in the past
From the days of his youth?

It is easy to die. Men have died
For a wish or a whim—
From bravado, or passion, or pride—
Was it harder for him?

But to live—every day to live out
All the truth that he dreamt,
While his friends met his conduct with doubt,
And the world with contempt—

Was it thus that he plodded ahead,
Never turning aside?
Then we will talk of the life that he led;
Never mind how he died.—*Ernest Crosby.*

That we, with all those that are departed in the true faith of thy holy name, may have our perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in thy eternal and everlasting glory.—*Ritual.*

To start thee on thy outrunning race,
Christ shows the splendor of his face;
What shall that face of splendor be
When at the goal he welcomes thee?—*Rossetti.*

One God, who ever lives and loves,
One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event,
To which the whole creation moves.—*Tennyson.*

XXIV.

THE CONSUMMATION OF SALVATION.

The consummation of personal salvation will be realized only in heaven. Christ's redeeming purpose and work in us will not be fully accomplished and finished until we shall be "presented faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." Of the doctrine of heaven and the future life as belonging to eschatology, we do not propose now to write. It is of heaven as the full realization and culmination of the great work of personal salvation that we now write. This full, final, perfect, eternal salvation that is to be realized after death is presented to us throughout the New Testament as the object of our largest and most glorious hope.

The Ideally Perfect Life Realized Only in Heaven.—We have seen that there are three salvations spoken of in the New Testament: (1) That at conversion, "He that believeth shall be saved;" (2) that which carries on the salvation thus begun, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling: for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do;" and (3) that which will be realized at death and the day of final judgment, "He that endureth to the end shall be saved." The first two have already been pre-

sented in detail; we come now to the third, that by which the believer is fully, finally, and forever saved. We call that future life upon which the regenerate believer enters at death the "sinless life," and those who are forever saved we designate preëminently as the "saints," the "holy ones," the "spirits of just men made perfect." We speak again of the sinlessness, the purity, the holiness, the perfection, of heaven, in a way to imply that, while these terms may be applied to life and character here on earth, it is only of those who are finally saved in heaven that all these words can always be used without qualification. The vocabulary of heaven has in it only terms of positive moral excellence; of beings there it may not be said, as it is said of believers here, that one is less sinful than another. Good, better, and best; holy, holier, and holiest, are words which may indicate distinction in heaven; but every word indicating less of moral excellence than "good" must be marked "obsolete" in the dictionary of the saints that are forever saved in heaven.

Different Degrees of Holiness in Heaven.—It does not follow, if such a work as we have described be wrought at death, that it reduces all believers to the same degree and state of holiness. On the contrary, the great multitude of believers, while alike in that all are in a saved state, differ greatly in their spiritual development and attain-

ments throughout all the stages of this probationary state; and so in the heavenly life "one star differeth from another star in glory," and every man will be rewarded, not because of, but according to, his works, "according to the deeds done in the body." The differences in happiness and glory hereafter will be infallibly determined by the differences in piety and holiness here. This creaturely and probationary holiness attained here below will develop and constitute a capacity for extracting happiness out of heaven. All the saved will be gathered together in the one and selfsame heaven; but, as different individuals in a vast library or art gallery extract different degrees of happiness from their environments according to their several capacities, so one saved soul will derive more happiness from heaven than another.

The Happiness of Heaven Conditioned on Holiness.—Holiness, then, not happiness, is the primary idea of heaven. Holiness first and happiness second; holiness the cause, and happiness the result. The saints are not holy because they are in heaven, but they are in heaven because they are holy. Holiness makes heaven. A soul in heaven without holiness could not be happy. The happiness of heaven comes not merely from external environments, but more especially from adaptation to environments—that is, from character, from a pure heart and holy nature. The more of holiness the saved soul possesses, the more of happi-

ness will heaven yield to him. The degrees of happiness in heaven are determined not by the arbitrary will of God, but primarily by the varying degrees of holiness to which believers attain during their probation here below. Many speak of heaven as if its happiness came entirely from external environment; so much so that if, by chance, any sinful soul should find its way into heaven he would be happy. Far from it; he would probably be far more miserable in the presence of that God who is a consuming fire to sinners than if he were in his own place among the lost. Does a wicked and vicious soul in this world seek fellowship with the pure and holy children of God, and find his happiness there, or does the "happiness of sin" endeavor to make itself less miserable by seeking its own and mingling with souls of like depravity and guilt? If the latter be true of this life, it is surely none the less true of the life that is to come. The misery of lost souls in hell grows not simply out of their environments, but more particularly out of their depravity and sinfulness and guilt. In like manner the happiness of heaven grows out of, and is inseparable from, holiness of heart and spirit, graciously attained by the aid of the Holy Spirit during this state of probation. There are many things pertaining to heaven and the life of the saved hereafter upon which revelation has thrown but little light; but of one thing we are assured, that those who are

finally and forever saved in heaven shall have no sin in them; they will be entirely holy, and their happiness will be limited only by their holiness. Whatever may be lacking at death in the character of justified and regenerate Christians to fit them for the abode of the holy God and the holy angels, God will then graciously supply. Heaven is, whatever it may or may not be, the holy land. It is therefore the goal of the regenerate believer's aspirations and expectations, and the great consummation of the work of personal salvation.

God's Glory Promoted by Man's Holiness and Happiness.—Man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever. But it is impossible to glorify the holy God without holiness, and it is impossible to have holiness and not glorify him. In like manner it is impossible to enjoy God without being holy, and, conversely, it is impossible but that a holy person shall enjoy God and be happy. Man's chief end will be realized only in heaven; and this not because heaven is a place of supreme happiness, but rather because it is a place of supreme holiness. We are taught to pray, "Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven." Here God's will is carried out but imperfectly; in heaven it is carried out perfectly. This is the best test and proof of holiness in a creature: doing perfectly the will of the Creator; and this, more than all things else, glorifies God. We are not so made

that God's glory and the creature's truest and highest enjoyment are opposed to each other. It is true that here in this earthly state of probation the pleasure and happiness of the creature must often, in a sense, be sacrificed in order to promote God's glory; but that is due to our imperfection, and to the fact that we can be made perfect here only by suffering. It was not so in the primitive state of the race, and it will not be so in heaven. That which will secure God's highest glory is that which alone can secure the true and abiding enjoyment of the creature—namely, holiness. God's glory cannot possibly be promoted by the damnation and misery of any soul, because the damnation and misery of the lost are due, not to the arbitrary will of God, but wholly to their own willful and persistent sin; and sin is disobedience to, and transgression of, the will of God, and can never possibly glorify God. When we say therefore that God made all things for his glory, we should not lose sight of the fact that his glory can be promoted only by the holiness and happiness of his creatures, and this chief end will be realized by all who are finally and forever saved in heaven. For this grand consummation all God's children wait in faith and hope, and with largest expectations.

Scripture Proof of This Doctrine.—The Christian Scriptures abundantly justify these expectations: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth

not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he (or *it*, Revised Version) shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." This passage, as commonly interpreted, points to a heavenly perfection and a likeness to Christ which shall be possible to the sons of God only when they shall see their Lord face to face, and abide with him continually. "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. . . . As we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly;" and that "image of the heavenly" which we shall then bear must not be limited to the resurrection body. When that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away. . . . Now we see through a glass, darkly; but then face to face; now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." The heavenly state is here alluded to as "that which is perfect." Imperfect vision and partial knowledge are the lot of all here below; even our highest perfection here is but imperfection compared with the holiness and perfection of the saints in heaven.

The Far More Exceeding and Eternal Weight of Glory.—"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are tem-

poral; but the things which are not seen are eternal. For we know that, if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven; if so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life. Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit." (2 Cor. iv. 17–v. 5.) In these words we have the foundation laid for the largest expectations as to what believers shall experience in the future life. The "far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" is an expression fraught with a meaning, the full depth and significance of which can be understood only when it is reread in the light of the other world. The best that this life can yield to the believer fails to satisfy him fully. He longs for immortality, for a something that this life cannot give him. It is not "reward" or mere "creature happiness" that he longs for; it is a completer and fuller spiritual life. He feels within himself that his salvation is not complete until he enters upon another life. Revelation answers these cravings of his soul, and tells him that they shall be satisfied in heaven.

The Hope Laid Up in Heaven.—We read in Scripture of "the hope that is laid up for us in heaven" (Col. i. 5), that we "may obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory" (2 Tim. ii. 10), that we "have in heaven a better and an enduring substance" (Heb. x. 34). "God hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, . . . to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you." (1 Pet. i. 3, 4.) "The God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory." (1 Pet. v. 10.) "We, according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness. Wherefore, beloved, seeing that ye look for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless." These passages of Scripture do not bid us defer any part of our work in our own salvation until death and the life that follows; on the contrary, that which determines our salvation under grace is what we do in this life of probation, which ends at death. But shall we say that our Saviour's gracious and blessed work with his own redeemed children ends then? By no means. The glorious completion and consummation of our salvation he has reserved for the future life.

The Realization of God's Purpose in Man's Salvation.—"The universe and human life in it," says Dr. J. A. Beet, "began with an eternal thought in the mind of

an intelligent and almighty and all-loving Creator; it will find its consummation in the complete and eternal realization of that thought. The present universe and human life and history, as we know them, are the transition from the eternal thought to the eternal realization. In that transition we are permitted and compelled to take part. What our part is to be, depends entirely upon ourselves. And upon our part in the process now going on, depends our place in the realization."

The Consummation in Heaven.—This consummation of salvation in heaven is the "final cause" of man's creation in the beginning, and also later of the redemptive work of Christ. A final cause is first in thought, but last in accomplishment and realization. That which was first in the mind of the triune God was a race of beings who should be free, and possessed of a holiness possible only to free beings, and supremely happy because thus holy. Such beings would, it was divinely foreseen, glorify God more than any and all things else in the created universe. The divine motive, alike in the work of creation and in redemption and in personal salvation through the agency of the Holy Ghost, was to secure just such a race of beings as shall be thus perfectly free, entirely holy, and supremely happy. This divine ideal will be realized only in heaven; but, happy and glorious thought, it will be realized there!

FOREVER WITH THE LORD.

"Forever with the Lord!"
Amen, so let it be!
Life from the dead is in that word,
'Tis immortality.
Here in the body pent,
Absent from him I roam,
Yet nightly pitch my moving tent,
A day's march nearer home.

"Forever with the Lord!"
Father, if 'tis thy will,
The promise of that faithful word,
E'en here to me fulfill.
So when my latest breath
Shall rend the veil in twain,
By death I shall escape from death,
And life eternal gain.

Knowing as I am known,
How shall I love that word,
And oft repeat before the throne,
"Forever with the Lord!"
"Forever with the Lord!"
Amen, so let it be!
Life from the dead is in that word,
'Tis immortality.

James Montgomery.

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XXV.

THE TRUE THEORY OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

"And he gave some *to be* apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: that we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; but speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: from whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love." (Eph. iv. 11-16.)

I seek two things in this world—truth and love; whosoever assists me in this search is a friend indeed.—*John Wesley.*

Our little systems have their day;
They have their day and cease to be:
They are but broken lights of thee,
And thou, O Lord, art more than they.—*Tennyson.*

Ignorance is the curse of God;
Knowledge, the wing wherewith we fly to heaven.
Shakespeare.

It fortifies my soul to know
That, though I perish, Truth is so;
That, howsoe'er I stray and range,
Where'er I go, Thou dost not change.
I steadier step when I recall
That if I slip Thou dost not fall.—*Arthur Hugh Clough.*

O Saul, it shall be
A Face like my face that receives thee; a Man like to me,
Thou shalt love and be loved by, forever; a Hand like this hand
Shall throw open the gates of new life to thee. See the Christ stand!—*Robert Browning.*

XXV.

THE TRUE THEORY OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE.

MATTHEW ARNOLD has defined the true thinker as one who "sees truth sanely and sees it whole." No theory of thought or of life can be a true theory that does not present things *sanely* and present them *whole*. A theory of anything is an intelligent, self-consistent conception of that thing in all its relations. Truth is self-consistent. Whatever is true harmonizes with every other truth in the whole universe. One truth can never antagonize another truth. If there may seem to be antagonism or want of harmony between two things accepted as true, it can only be because one or the other is not true. But some things are half truths; and it is these half truths that give most trouble in the realm of thought. As Tennyson has sung:

> A lie that is all a lie
> May be met and fought outright;
> But a lie that is half a truth
> Is a harder matter to fight.

Palpable errors are quickly seen and rejected; but the error that is clothed with truth is the dangerous error. It is the element of truth in false theories and

erroneous systems that gives them their power for evil. A large part of the progress of human thought consists in the discovery of the error that lurks in that which has been accepted as true. The physician must first discover and locate the disease before it is possible to successfully treat and cure the patient. Errors that lurk in human systems of thought may be compared to diseases in the body. They must be eliminated before true theories can become possible. The following lines may be true in part of a lesser doctor and teacher, but they are fully true only of Him who was at once the great Physician and the perfect Teacher of truth:

> "He took the suffering human race;
> He read each wound, each weakness clear,
> And struck his finger on the place,
> And said: 'Thou ailest *here*—and *here*.'"

It is only by keeping close to the theology of Christ that we can hope to eliminate all error and reach a true theory of the Christian life. That theory will not fail to make much of his person as well as of his teachings. The true theory of religion, whatever it may or may not be in other respects, must be Christocentric. In this realm Christ and truth are, if not identical, at least inseparable.

Christian Theology a Logical Science.—Christian theology is a strictly logical science. A system of theology that is not logical cannot be true. Cal-

vinism is a logical system of theology. Evangelical Arminianism is likewise a logical system. A system of theology may be logical and yet untrue, because the premises on which it is founded are untrue. Calvinism is built on this premise: "God hath from all eternity unconditionally foreordained all things, whatsoever come to pass; and this is true even of the volitions of men and angels." Starting with this false premise, it is impossible for the most perfect logical development of the Calvinistic system to save it from error at many points. The real point of departure between Calvinism and Arminianism is in the different answers given to the question as to whose will determines who is to be saved and who lost. Calvinism says that God's will has already in eternity decided that question for every man, while Arminianism says that every created free agent decides the question of his own salvation for himself. Every doctrine of Calvinism and Arminianism respectively may be logically evolved from the answer given to this question. But Evangelical or Wesleyan Arminianism differs somewhat from the Arminianism of the early Remonstrants of Holland; and so we prefer to say that Evangelical Arminianism starts with these two premises: "(1) Jesus Christ by his sacrificial life and death has made possible the salvation of all men; (2) every man is a self-determining moral free agent." All the rest of Evangel-

ical Arminianism is, or ought to be, a "therefore," following logically from these two premises. So far as the celebrated "five points" of difference between Calvinism and Arminianism are concerned, there is practically no difference between the Arminianism of the Remonstrants and that of Wesley. But while the former type of Arminianism is intellectually and logically true enough, it is as cold as an iceberg; it lacks spiritual vitality. When this logical and scriptural system of truth, however, got into the head and heart of John Wesley, it was at once laid on the altar—was soundly converted, so to speak—and was baptized with the Holy Ghost, and started forth on its divine mission in the world's evangelization. The fact that no branch of the Christian Church has ever, from the day of Pentecost until the present, grown so rapidly for the same length of time as that Church which has constructed its system of theology on the two inseparable premises—an unlimited atonement in Jesus Christ, and the true moral free agency of man—is the best possible evidence of the spiritual vitality and power that is at the heart of its theology.

Illogical Definitions the Cause of Friction in Theology.—But it is possible for a system of theology to be in the main logical and yet have one or more doctrines which, as defined, are illogical, and hence cannot in that form be logically adjusted to the system of which they are a part. Any given doctrine that

is not properly defined and adjusted to its logical environment will not only be the occasion of friction, but, if it be an important and cardinal doctrine, it will prove a perpetual storm center of doctrinal disagreement until it is accurately defined and properly adjusted to the logical system of which it is an indispensable part. And so we may say, *per contra*, that if any given doctrine creates, and continues to create, discussions which reveal serious differences of opinion among those who are agreed as to all other doctrines in the system, it can only be because that doctrine has not been properly defined. Is there now, let us ask, any doctrine of Methodism of which these things are true, any doctrine which has been a kind of "storm center" in Methodist theology from the very beginning of its existence as a religious organization? Most surely there is, and has always been, one—and only one—the doctrine of "sanctification" or "Christian perfection." And does not the law of logic above mentioned apply in this case? We think it does. The theory of the Christian life which we have presented in this volume comprehends the entire range of Christian doctrine pertaining to personal salvation. Of these various doctrines we do not care to write further. We wish to consider now only the one main point of friction, the doctrine that gives signs of a maladjustment to the system of Christian theology of which it is a part and

which is held with practical unanimity by the people called Methodists the world over. He who can relieve this friction in any degree will so far help to remove a serious incubus from that theology which, because of its simplicity, scripturalness, evangelical power, and world-wide adaptability, comes nearer perhaps being the theology toward which the Christian world is tending at the present time than that which has been held and preached by any other Church. And Methodism cannot hope to impress its theology upon the world more effectually than by bringing it to pass that it shall be so accepted and preached by all evangelical Christians as to be no longer called Arminian or Wesleyan or Methodist, but simply the true theology of the Christian Church. In that Nirvana of perfect Christian unity, brought about through a like faith in and knowledge of the Son of God, Methodism will rejoice to see its own individuality completely swallowed up and lost.

Theological and Devotional Literature Distinguished.—There is a difference between theology and that form of religious literature which is designed primarily to contribute to the spiritual and ethical life of man. Theology rightly defined has reference to creeds, confessions of faith, and biblical, dogmatic, and systematic theology. These are didactic in their nature, are addressed primarily to the head, and are designed to instruct the reader in the true theory of the

Christian religion. While this is their immediate and primary object, their final end is to develop Christian life and character by establishing the foundations of rational and scriptural truth upon which life and character rest. And we may also say that that must be an exceedingly cold and lifeless volume of theology which does not incidentally, while being read, contribute in some degree to the spiritual life of the reader. Theology, to serve its purpose, must be self-consistent and logical throughout; and to the extent that it is otherwise, it is bound to fail to meet the end for which it exists. A serious defect in logic vitiates the value of a theological treatise and exposes it justly to criticism. But with devotional literature the case is different; and sermons belong to this class of literature. A theologian *must be* logical; and to be inaccurate, confused, and illogical in his statements is to place himself at the mercy of critics who will make haste to show wherein and why his system must be rejected as unsatisfactory. A theologian must be sound in his exegesis; and for him to base a doctrine on a false exegesis of Scripture is to construct a house on the sand, which must either be torn down or washed away. Of a preacher, however, we may say that, while he should be logical and sound in his exegesis, it is possible for him to be a great preacher and exercise a most powerful and helpful influence upon the consciences and spirit-

ual lives of his hearers in spite of the fact that he may be inaccurate and illogical in many of his theological statements, and may misinterpret many texts which he may quote in his sermons. It is possible for a volume of sermons to be of a very high order of devotional literature and full of spiritual quickening to all who read them, and yet be very faulty and unsatisfactory if it should be used and appealed to as a book of systematic theology. Let us apply this distinction now to John Wesley as a preacher and theologian.

John Wesley's Greatness as a Preacher.—No history of the doctrines of spiritual religion can ever be written that does not make grateful mention of the name and work of John Wesley. His contributions to the literature of this department of theology are of the highest value. He had a personal passion for righteousness scarcely equaled by any man that has lived since the age of the apostles; and he transmitted this zeal for holiness in a rare degree to his writings. It is all but impossible to rise up from the perusal of any of his sermons or other devotional writings without feeling an intense desire to be a better and holier man. This is the true test of a great preacher. The sermons of Wesley cover sixty years of his busy life. They were produced mostly when his mind was at white heat and all aglow with whatever phase of doctrine or religious life and experience was at that particular time uppermost in his

thoughts. They have from first to last the consistency of a soul bent on holiness and desirous of doing good to the souls of men. They have the consistency that marks the writings of a man who was always and everywhere a truth-seeker, and was ready and anxious to learn from anybody, great or small, and anywhere, in the palace or the cottage or the coal mine or the prison—a man who was never too old to learn from the youngest of Christ's disciples, and, although a scholar of rare ability, never too learned himself to learn from the humblest and least of God's children. His sermons have the moral and spiritual consistency of a man who says: "I would rather be right than consistent: I would rather believe and teach that which I here and now feel to be the truth than to be continually stopping and asking myself whether this statement I am about to make or have just made accords perfectly with what I have previously said and written." That is the kind of consistency we want to see in a preacher and religious writer, and that is just the kind of self-consistency we find in the writings of John Wesley. But uniform theological and doctrinal self-consistency—is *that* found there? And would we seriously detract from their true spiritual value if we should be compelled to say that it is not found there? Take those superb sermons of Wesley, many of which have become classics in devotional literature, and turn them over to the system-

atic theologian that he may square all their doctrinal statements so that they shall constitute a harmonious and self-consistent system of Christian theology, and what will be the result? If he succeeds in accomplishing his task, he will be sure to devitalize them and rob them of half their moral and spiritual power, and thus destroy their true value *as sermons;* and this in spite of the fact that they are unsurpassed for spiritual power in the sermonic literature of the world. In other words, while the ideal and perfect preacher will be absolutely logical in his theology and always sound in his exegesis, we *can have* a truly great and spiritual preacher open more or less to criticism in this respect, but at the same time entirely sound and self-consistent in whatever makes for the development of the spiritual life in man.

John Wesley as a Theologian.—If Wesley's sermons are set up as a system of Christian doctrine, therefore, it must be conceded that they are in many respects inadequate, inharmonious, unsatisfactory, perplexing, open to criticism. Many of Mr. Wesley's followers have used his sermons as if they contained a logical and perfect system of Christian theology. To set him before the world, however, as a theologian and as an authority in doctrine is to do him a great wrong and subject him to needless criticism. He has suffered greatly in this way at the hands of his friends. But he is the best friend of Wesley who,

seeing where his true greatness lies, sets him forth not as the model and authoritative theologian but as the spiritual preacher and the great religious leader. If one should take up John Wesley's writings and examine them as if they were a systematic theology to find a logical and self-consistent treatment of the doctrine of holiness, it would not be surprising if he should reach the conclusion that it is practically impossible to reconcile Wesley with himself, owing to the fact that his writings contain here and there statements and views that are incapable of being harmonized with statements and views found elsewhere in his writings. Notwithstanding the fact that he began writing and publishing sermons on spiritual religion many years before he was converted, and continued to do so through a long life that seemed always to be undergoing a marvelous spiritual development—each successive sermon bearing the stamp of whatever shade of opinion he then held—yet he later in life gathered these writings together and republished them without alterations; and he claimed that they were self-consistent. And they were self-consistent *as he read them* and saw everywhere pervading them the spirit that was passionately pursuing the perfect life. But entire dogmatic and theological self-consistency and harmony — they are not there. And all the proof that is needed to justify this assertion is to point to the endless dis-

cussions that have been going on for a hundred years over the Methodist doctrine of Christian perfection as set forth in the writings of John Wesley. A careful student of Wesleyan theology will find that there are two distinct and fundamentally different views of Christian perfection that are merged together in Wesley's writings.

The First View—Christian Perfection Identified with the Ideal Life of Every Child of God.—The first view is that which regards every child of God who measures up to the ideal state of a justified and regenerate believer as "perfect" in the New Testament sense of that term. It is based on the conception that the Christian religion is one of perfection; that the genuine and ideal Christian as described in the Bible is one that is entirely holy and free from all sin, one whose heart and life are entirely dominated by love for God and man; that nothing that may *properly* be called sin is to be regarded as belonging to or characterizing a true and genuine Christian. Justification and regeneration are regarded as those radical operations of divine grace which, being preceded by repentance and faith and followed by the witness of the Spirit, constitute a man a true child of God. Mankind is divided into two, and but two, radically different classes—viz., sinners and Christians—made different by the fact that the one have experienced a radical moral transformation which the other have

not. If anything sinful is found characterizing the inner states or outer acts of a professing Christian, such sin is not treated as if it were compatible with the experience and life of a genuine Christian, but is rather condemned as wholly inconsistent therewith; and if those who claim to be genuine Christians do not come up to this definition, the thing which it is insisted must be done is, not to modify and pull the definition down to fit their cases, but to pull them up to fit the definition, and steadfastly refuse to regard them as normal and ideal Christians until they do measure up to the definition. Wherever this conception of Christian perfection for the time being dominates Mr. Wesley's mind, he magnifies the work of justification and regeneration, and identifies sanctification and Christian perfection with religion in its ideal and normal state; and hence leaves no room or necessity for any second radical work of grace subsequent to regeneration—not at least in the case of any man who attains and retains the normal experience and life of a justified and regenerate Christian.* The fruits of the Spirit which he predicates of all regenerate believers who measure up to this definition and this ideal cover absolutely every virtue and grace that can be predicated of any Christian, unless it be those which imply Christian maturity.

* This will be obvious to every one who will turn and read the quotations from Mr. Wesley on pages 221, 243, 270.

The Second View—Entire Sanctification an Instantaneous Experience Subsequent to Regeneration.—The second view of Christian perfection identifies it with sanctification, and is based on the idea that to be a truly justified and regenerate child of God is not in itself alone to possess Christian perfection. True and genuine Christians are divided into two radically different classes—viz., the unsanctified and the entirely sanctified—made different by the fact that the latter have experienced a radical and instantaneous work of divine grace which none of the former have experienced; and the latter alone are to be called "perfect." While those who have experienced justification and regeneration are to be regarded as true, genuine, and normal Christians and are saved from sin, yet "inbred sin" is not yet removed, and hence they continue to be "carnal"—are conscious in themselves of sinful feelings and tempers, and manifest outwardly sinful self-will, pride, resentment, love of the world, and other like sinful tempers—until they experience a second radical and instantaneous work of divine grace, called "entire sanctification," which saves them from all sin and brings them into the experience of Christian perfection, and thenceforward perfect love to God and man reigns supreme in their hearts and lives; and this second change (sanctification) is unspeakably greater and more important than the first (regeneration). Whenever this conception of

Christian perfection fills Mr. Wesley's mind, there is a manifest, though perhaps unconscious, tendency to so far minify the work of justification and regeneration as to leave believers carnal and sinful, and thus render absolutely necessary a second work of grace in order to secure salvation from all sin.* This theory of sanctification is one that is necessitated by the "residue theory" of regeneration which Mr. Wesley adopted from the Ninth Article of the Church of England, and in harmony with which he wrote his sermons on "Sin in Believers" and "The Repentance of Believers." It also harmonized with the testimony of many of his followers, who said that after their regeneration they had a most gracious and blessed experience which was described as "salvation from *all* sin" and the attainment of "perfect love."

The Two Views Compared.—Mr. Wesley never seems to have realized that in adopting the theory of instantaneous sanctification with all its concomitants he was introducing an element into his doctrine of Christian perfection that was logically and theologically irreconcilable with the doctrine which he had been preaching from the beginning of his ministry. From his first published sermon, on "Circumcision of the Heart," to his last public utterances on the subject, he steadfastly maintained *a doctrine* of Chris-

* See quotation from Mr. Wesley on page 357 for proof of this statement.

tian perfection; and he pleads this fact as if it fully proved that his views concerning the doctrine never underwent any material change and that all his statements were uniform and self-consistent throughout his life. But Dr. Whitehead, his first biographer, and Mr. Tyerman, his greatest biographer and interpreter, have both pointed out* wherein he was mistaken in this impression, and have shown very clearly that when he adopted the view of *instantaneous* sanctification, with all its necessary concomitants—and did so, not on the ground that his own experience or the Bible plainly taught the doctrine, but because some of his converts said that after being first justified and regenerated they were later instantaneously "saved from *all* sin"—then it was that he introduced for the first time that element into his doctrine which has been the fruitful cause of serious differences of opinion among his followers from that day to this. Both of these conceptions of sanctification call for a progressive and gradual work beginning at regeneration and continuing until death; so that the choice one is called on to make is not between Mr. Wesley's doctrine of progressive sanctification and his doctrine of instantaneous sanctification. But the choice is between a doctrine which teaches that no conscious sin of any kind belongs to a true and genuine believer at any stage of his Christian life, from the moment of

*See Tyerman's Life of Wesley, Vol. II., pp. 417, 461.

his justification and regeneration till his death, and another doctrine which teaches that sins of a certain kind (inbred sin, sins of feeling, thought, temper, etc.) are predicable in varying degrees of *all* true believers from the moment of their regeneration until they experience a second radical and instantaneous work of grace, called entire sanctification, by which they are saved from all sin and made entirely holy. That is to say, the sinless character which Mr. Wesley predicates in the first view of every believer whom he regards as fulfilling the definition of a true Bible Christian, in the other view he predicates of only such justified and regenerate believers as have experienced a second instantaneous work of grace subsequent to their regeneration. But it is logically impossible to merge and blend these two views together as if there were no inconsistency between them. The point of difference between them is fundamental and vital. Could Mr. Wesley have discriminated more accurately here, it would not only have saved him from being quoted on both sides of theories that differ, but it would have clarified and simplified his own "exceedingly complex idea of sanctification" (as he in one place designates his view of the doctrine) and saved his followers, who are a unit in their love and veneration for him, from many an unprofitable discussion of this perpetual problem of Methodism.

The Illogical Point in Wesleyan Theology.—We are not alone in believing that an unscriptural view of sin in the regenerate is not only a most serious breach in the logic and harmony of Wesleyan Arminian theology, but is the fruitful cause of well-nigh all differences among Methodists concerning the doctrine of sanctification. Dr. John Miley, who is perhaps the ablest and most representative theologian which American Methodism has yet produced, says:

> Regeneration should not be undervalued, as it sometimes is, through an unwise zeal for the doctrine of sanctification. The less the work of regeneration, the greater the work of sanctification; so the former is sometimes held to be a very imperfect work, that the greater prominence may be given to the latter. But it is unwise, and a perversion of vital truth, to lower one fact in the work of salvation in order to exalt another. Regeneration is not a superficial work; nor is it, nor can it be, a small thing to be born of the Spirit. Further, there is a mistaken use of certain instances of defective Christian life, particularly in the Churches of Corinth, Galatia, and Asia, which leads to a false view of regeneration. The mistake arises in the treatment of such instances just as though they represented a true and normal regenerate life, whereas the Scriptures treat them as instances of very serious degeneration. This must be plain to any one who will study even a part of the appropriate texts. Hence they cannot fairly represent the true regenerate life. If the aim was to prove that there may be serious degeneration without an utter forfeiture of the regenerate state, these instances would be in point; but they cannot be in point for the proof of the traditional doctrine of sin in the regenerate, because in such

use it must be assumed that they fairly represent the normal regenerate life; and such an assumption is openly contrary to the Scriptures.

We cannot think Mr. Wesley's notable sermon on "Sin in Believers" entirely clear of this error. It is the traditional doctrine which he therein maintains, and which he largely supports with such instances of degenerate Christian life as we before noted. There is in his discussion no dissent from that doctrine respecting the low state of regenerate life which it assumes; no discrimination between the true regenerate life and that defective form of it represented by these instances of serious degeneration. . . . Mr. Wesley was doctrinally educated in the Anglican Articles, and in the Ninth, which formulates this doctrine, just as he was in the others; and, while he came to far deeper and clearer views of the regenerate life than this article allows, yet it is the doctrinal basis of his sermon on "Sin in Believers." On the other hand, such views of regenerate life as shall answer to the traditional doctrine of sin in believers must be most harmful. According to that doctrine, there is unavoidably much sin in the regenerate life; and yet such sin is not sin—that is, it is not counted to the regenerate as sin. . . . Such views of the regenerate life are neither truly scriptural nor truly Wesleyan. Hence we must think that Mr. Wesley's sermon on "Sin in Believers" is not true either to the real truth of regeneration or to its own truthful views of that great and gracious work. All this must be plain to any one who will fairly compare that sermon with his sermon on "The Marks of the New Birth." Indeed, his "Plain Account of Christian Perfection" is pervaded with views of regeneration in full accord with the latter sermon, but which are strongly out of accord with the special doctrine maintained in the former.

The Possibility of Entire Sanctification Being Wrought at Conversion.—Mr. Wesley conceded that it was *possible* for sanctification to take place at the same time as justification, but considered that such cases must be exceedingly rare and exceptional, as he had never known of one himself. He says: "Sometimes God cuts short his work. He does the work of many years in a few weeks; perhaps in a week, a day, an hour. He justifies or sanctifies both those who have done or suffered nothing and who have not had time for a gradual growth either in light or grace." In examining fifty-one cases of those who claimed to be saved from all sin, in 1762, he finds one in whom the mighty change was wrought only three weeks after she was justified; in three cases it was only one week after justification; in one case, a girl fourteen years old, it occurred two days after the experience of justification; two of them professed the blessing the day after their conversion, and "Grace Paddy of Redruth," most remarkable of all, was "convinced of sin, converted to God, and renewed in love within twelve hours!" "Yet this is by no means incredible," Wesley adds, "seeing one day is with God as a thousand years." Wesley, admitting as he did the genuineness of all these cases, could not consistently deny the possibility of pardon and "salvation from all sin" taking place at the same time. "In a few cases," says Bishop Peck, a strong advocate of the

doctrine of instantaneous sanctification, "we believe that the blessing has been received so soon after regeneration as to make the periods seem entirely identical," and "some really do pass from a state of guilt into the full enjoyment of perfect purity." "I do not deny," says Rev. W. I. Gill, another defender of this view, "that regeneration and entire sanctification are sometimes coinstantaneous. . . . It is surely within the power of God to sanctify entirely when he regenerates. . . . Many, in seeking religion, have conceived that its attainment would be perfect holiness. . . . We see nothing in Scripture to forbid such expectation. It enjoins this state from the first, declares the provisions for it complete, and the promises of God fully and clearly cover it." Now if it is possible for a penitent believer to be "saved from all sin" at the same time that he is justified and regenerated, it is certainly exceedingly desirable that this complete salvation should be experienced by all at this earliest possible moment. And this leads us naturally to inquire why it is that most people are simply partially saved from sin at conversion (that is, if this be the case), and only a very few are fully saved at that time. The reason must be either in the preacher, who explains the way of salvation, or in the sinner, whose conviction, penitence, and faith are not thorough enough to meet the conditions of a full salvation, or in God,

who for wise reasons does not do what he could do if he would. Whitefield assigned the last-named reason, and said that God left Amalekites in the land to keep the children of Israel humble; and so He leaves some sin in the heart of his children, after they enter upon their inheritance of sonship, to keep them humble—in other words, God leaves sin in the heart of the regenerate in order that it may develop in them humility and other Christian virtues! We cannot accept this view, and so we must find the explanation in one or both of the other reasons—and the two may go together—that is, if the preacher does not believe in a *full* salvation at conversion and does not preach it, the penitents who are following his guidance may repent and believe only according to the light they have, and thus fall short of a full salvation. But we insist that this is the only ideal conversion to aim at—viz., full salvation from all sin at the very beginning of the Christian life. And if this be possible, should we not regard it as the only normal and scriptural conversion? And should not every preacher interpret his commission as enjoining upon him the proclamation to all sinners of a salvation which is *from all sin* that is then seen and known, and *unto all holiness*, virtue, truth, love and duty, that may be then or thereafter seen and known?

Charles Wesley's Change in Doctrine.—Charles Wesley for a while believed in the doctrine of "*in-*

stantaneous sanctification," and wrote many hymns in accordance with that faith. But he later abandoned the doctrine—not of the possibility of entire sanctification and Christian perfection, but only the belief that it could be instantaneously obtained—and even went so far as to write some hymns to offset the hymns he had written in favor of the doctrine. He seems to have found, upon further and maturer reflection, that the doctrine could not be reconciled with the high ideal of Christian experience and life which he thought could alone be consistently designated by that term. But we will let his greatest biographer, Thomas Jackson, speak for him:

> Until this time [1762] it had been understood that Mr. Charles Wesley agreed with his brother on this as well as every other doctrine of Christian verity; although he had repeatedly used unguarded expressions in his hymns, which could not be justified. But now his views on this subject appear to have undergone a change, in consequence of the extravagance and pride of which he was a distressed witness. He did not from this time contend, as many do, for the necessary continuance of indwelling sin till death; but he spoke of Christian perfection as a much higher attainment than either he or his brother had previously regarded it. In his estimation, it is not to be obtained by a present act of faith in the mercy, truth, and power of God; but it is rather the result of severe discipline, comprehending affliction, temptation, long-continued labor, and the persevering exercise of faith in seasons of spiritual darkness, when the heart is wrung with bitter anguish. By this painful and lingering process he be-

lieved the death of the "old man" is effected and a maturity is given to all the graces of the Christian character. Hence he condemned "the witnesses," as he called them—that is, the persons who testified of the time and manner in which they were delivered from the root of sin and made perfect in love, regarding them as self-deceived. In some of his "Short Hymns" he has given considerable importance to these peculiarities of opinion. This change in Mr. Charles Wesley's manner of speaking on the subject of Christian perfection, as might be expected, gave considerable uneasiness to his brother, who felt it to be very undesirable that they should even seem to contradict each other in their ministry and writings. In a letter, therefore, to Miss Furley, he says: "Take care you are not hurt by anything in the 'Short Hymns' contrary to the doctrines you have long received."*

Wesley's Abridgment of the Ninth Article.—It has long been a subject of debate among students of Wesley's life and theology as to why he in 1784 omitted from the Ninth Article of the Church of England that part of it which he had at one time emphasized so strongly in his preaching. Some have taken the position that it indicates that in later life he abandoned the doctrine of indwelling sin in the regenerate as an article of his own faith; while others think that he continued to hold this doctrine to the last, but omitted the objectionable part of the Article only because it affirmed that this remaining sin involves moral guilt and is deserving of damnation.

*See Jackson's "Life of Charles Wesley," p. 595, and Tyerman's "Life of John Wesley," Vol. II., p. 442.

Yet others think the omission is due to the fact that the instantaneous and entire sanctification movement (which is founded on this part of the article) had yielded such unsatisfactory results that he had determined to let it quietly subside. From 1759 to 1767 he pressed it with all the vigor of his soul, as his sermons, pamphlets, hymns, conversations, and journals all show. But the professors of sanctification were sadly disappointing him. In the year 1770 he wrote that of those who had professed the blessing of entire sanctification hardly one in thirty retained it. Two years later (1772) he wrote to his brother Charles as follows: "I find almost all our preachers, in every circuit, have done with Christian perfection. They say they believe it; but they never preach it, or not once in a quarter. What is to be done? Shall we let it drop, or make a point of it? O what a thing it is to have *curam animarum!*" Thomas Maxfield and George Bell, who had been largely instrumental in inaugurating this movement, had left the Methodists and become among the most bitter opponents of Mr. Wesley and of this doctrine. If the reader will consult the third volume of Tyerman's "Life of Wesley," and also Mr. Wesley's sermons, journals, conversations, etc., printed during the last twelve or fifteen years before his death (in 1791), he will find how he answered the question which he propounded to his brother Charles in the letter quoted above. He

quietly "let it drop." This does not mean that he abandoned his doctrine, for he did not; it means that he let all *insistence* upon *instantaneous* sanctification quietly drop. Hence his writings immediately before and ever after 1784 contain very few allusions to inbred or indwelling sin, but he seems from this time on to regard a "voluntary transgression of a known law of God" as the only definition of sin consistent with Scripture. The few sermons which he preached on this subject during the last fifteen years of his life allowed great latitude as to whether entire sanctification is progressively or instantaneously attained. But he insisted to the last on the possibility of its being graciously attained by faith during this life. This he regarded as the *depositum* which the Lord committed to the people called Methodists.

Corruptio Optimi Pessima.—The worst of all corruptions is the corruption of that which is best, of the highest and holiest things. The highest and holiest of all doctrines is that of Christian perfection, or perfect love; and nothing can be more painful than to see it corrupted and degraded by fanaticism and falseness in teaching and profession. To preach the doctrine of perfect love in such a manner as to cause ill will and strife and dissensions in the flock of Christ; to make the doctrine of entire holiness, which ought to be the bond of perfectness, to be instead the breach of peace, and thus create contending factions in the

Church; to mistake sanctimoniousness for saintliness; to have lofty words of love on the lips while cherishing deep hate in the heart; to make profession of personal perfection, and then, in spite of this high claim, to exhibit temper, irritability, uncharitableness, disregard for the truth, dishonesty in business transactions, and other evidences of the carnal nature that are quite irreconcilable with any type whatsoever of pure Christian character these are some of the "worst corruptions of best things" which the ancient theologian had in mind when he coined the phrase *corruptio optimi pessima.* And if any or all of these things should appear in modern Christianity, they would only confirm more fully the truth contained in this expressive Latin phrase.* The strongest of modern Methodist theologians in England has said:

A certain fanaticism of devout ignorance has in every age led enthusiasts to mistake transient effusions of heavenly

* Other instances of the worst corruption of best things are pointed out by Bishop McTyeire in his sermon on "The Joint Witnesses." The Millerites claimed to receive "the witness of the Spirit" assuring them of the correctness of their views as to the approaching end of the world: and others in the civil war claimed to receive similar divine assurance of the triumph of their side. Yet other instances are found among those who advocate "Christian Science," "Faith Cure," etc. The reaction from all these abuses and excesses often lands the victims in skepticism and infidelity.

influence for a finished work of holiness. Religious enthusiasm often outruns discretion. . . . It has always been found that those who have perverted the term "perfect" into a designation of themselves have been antinomian in their spirit and practice. . . . The fanatical abuse of the term has tended to bring the phrase "Christian perfection" into discredit. The assumption of a claim to this perfection, and especially the use of the name, is a thing which the healthy sentiment of Christianity condemns. But this should not be used in argument against the doctrine itself of a possible deliverance from all sin.

There is no epoch or event in John Wesley's whole career as a preacher and religious leader that so thoroughly tried his wisdom and grace as when Thomas Maxfield and George Bell—who had had, as we have seen, so much to do with starting the "instantaneous sanctification" or "second blessing" movement—went off into fanaticism; got so "holy" that they thought Mr. Wesley unqualified to teach them anything, because he was not himself "sanctified;" began to create factions in the societies; presently got a "third blessing" and left the Church, with many of their sympathizers; and later repudiated the doctrine of Christian perfection altogether, and turned to preaching openly against it, one of them finally dying a rank infidel. And at the same time that Wesley was thus trying to control the fanatics within his societies he had to contend with the critics without, all of whom were pronouncing his doctrine of Christian

perfection unscriptural and false. It was a period that severely tried the strong mettle that was in the man. The Church and its leaders are never in need of more grace and wisdom than when they are called on to deal with "the fanaticism of devout ignorance," especially that form of it which tends to corrupt, in preaching, in practice, or in profession, the doctrine of Christian perfection. Light is a remedy for darkness, but not for blindness; knowledge and truth will banish ignorance and confirm faith, but they cannot cure fanaticism. That seems to be a kind of "thorn in the flesh" of the Church, which God, though giving grace to bear, will not remove lest she be "exalted above measure" at her prosperity.

A Possible Basis of Agreement.—The followers of John Wesley, throughout the world are, and have always been, more united perhaps than any other religious denomination in hearty support of the recognized theology of their Church. If this one point of doctrinal friction could be relieved, what might they not accomplish in the twentieth century in "spreading scriptural holiness over these lands?" If ever agreement is reached, it must be approached along these lines: (1) Making a clear distinction between Wesley as a theologian and Wesley as a preacher and devotional writer, let us recognize that it is preëminently in the realm of religious life and devotional literature that John Wesley can claim, by

intrinsic and superior merit, to be our *standard.* (2) Recognizing two distinct theories of entire sanctification as involved in his writings, let us *stress* the point which he admitted as possible—that "*instantaneous* sanctification," though generally occurring later, *may* take place *at conversion*—and we will thereby obliterate all necessary and radical differences between his two theories. (3) Let us urge all our preachers to preach a complete repentance and a complete faith, and a *full salvation from all sin*—that is, a full gospel—at the very threshold of the Christian life, and let us make this the *ideal* conversion aimed at. (4) If it be found that any one who thinks he has been converted comes to the consciousness of sin in himself of any kind—"inbred sin," sins of temper, pride, self-will, etc.—let us insist that he needs, and must have at once, a further radical and instantaneous work of grace in order to be saved from all sin; and let that work be called by any Scripture name that may suggest itself to any one as most proper. (5) Let all preach that doctrine of progressive holiness which is marked by freedom from all known sin at every stage of the Christian life—that gradual work which, beginning at regeneration, "may increase," to use Wesley's words, "more and more unto the perfect day." Is this not a true and self-consistent theory of entire sanctification or Christian perfection, which is at once thoroughly scrip-

tural and thoroughly "Wesleyan," and which should satisfy and unite all who believe in the cardinal principles of evangelical Arminian theology?

The True Points of Emphasis in Christian Theology.—Most of the existing creeds of the Christian Church have outlived their usefulness and efficiency. This is not necessarily because they are erroneous, but rather because they are totally inadequate to meet the demands of Christian faith in our day. In our judgment, the sooner the most of them are retired as obsolete the better it will be for the Christian religion. They are clad in the antiquated garments of the sixteenth century, and breathe the murky atmosphere at the mouth of the tunnel whence Christianity emerged from the Dark Ages into the light and liberty of day. But what is needed now is to inflate the lungs of Christian theology afresh with the purer and more invigorating air of this noonday of Christian freedom and truth. Let this be done, or the garments will become graveclothes, and the air, being too long retained, instead of giving life as it once did, will become the cause of disease and death. They alone can command the respect and attention of thinking men in our day who have a theology that can be preached, a theology that is at once both rational and scriptural. The ground of emphasis has been shifted in theology from what it was when our sixteenth century creeds were written. To them who recog-

nize man's true moral free agency, and who believe in the universal Fatherhood of a loving God, and in a Christ for the world and the world for Christ—and to them alone—belongs, by moral right, the privilege of occupying the foremost place in the moral conquest of the world. To them who believe that Christ not only has redeemed all sinners, but that the intensive power of his atonement is, by the agency of the Holy Spirit, as deep as its extension is wide; who believe that he can save unto the uttermost all sinners *from all sin*—to them, and to them alone, belongs, by right of faith, the privilege of preaching a *full* salvation. To them who believe that God's love and Christ's atonement are not only as wide as the human race and as deep as sin, but as high as heaven—to them, and to them alone, belongs the right to preach, in the full confidence of Christian hope, a salvation not only from all sin, but *unto all holiness.* That theory of the spiritual life which gives due emphasis to each one of this sacred quaternion of Christian doctrines—the moral free agency of man, the unlimited love of God as manifested in the atonement of Jesus Christ, the power and pledge of the Holy Spirit to save from all sin, and the possibility through grace of living a life of perfect love—that theory, however defective it may be in many minor points, cannot, we believe, be very far removed from *the true theory* of the Christian life.

TO ALL ETERNITY.

Let Him to whom we now belong
  His sovereign right assert,
And take up every thankful song,
  And every loving heart.

He justly claims us for his own,
  Who bought us with a price;
The Christian lives to Christ alone,
  To Christ alone he dies.

Jesus, thine own at last receive,
  Fulfill our heart's desire;
And let us to thy glory live,
  And in thy cause expire!

Our souls and bodies we resign:
  With joy we render thee
Our all, no longer ours, but thine
  To all eternity.

Charles Wesley.

Man is like a book: his birth is the title-page to the book; his baptism is the epistle dedicatory; his groans and crying are the epistle to the reader; his infancy and childhood are the table of contents of the whole ensuing treatise; his life and actions are the subject-matter of the book; his sins and errors of life are the errata or faults escaped in printing; and his repentance is the correction of them. Now amongst books, we know, some are large volumes, in folio; some little ones, in decimo sexto; and some are of other sizes, in octavo or quarto. Again, some of these are fairer bound, some in a plainer manner; some are bound in strong vellum or leather, and some in thin paper. Some again have piety for their subject and treat of godliness; others are profane pamphlets, full of wantonness and folly. But in the last page of every one of them there stands a word, which is FINIS, *implying the end of all.* — *Richard Gove, 1652.*

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